

EXCLUSIVE
INTEL ON SPIDER-MAN: FAR FROM HOME • DARK PHOENIX • HOBBS & SHAW • TOY STORY 4 AND MORE!

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW

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Entertainment WEEKLY

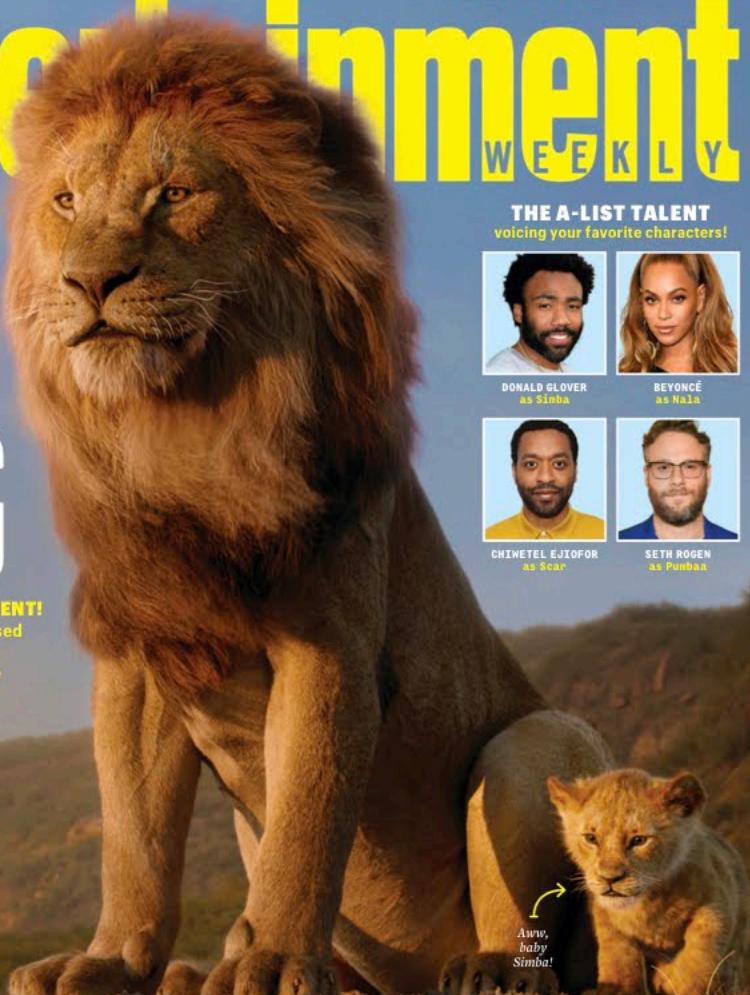
KING-SIZE
DOUBLE ISSUE

THE LION KING

THE SEASON'S MANE EVENT!

How director Jon Favreau used wild new tech—and a slew of superstars—to reimagine a beloved Disney classic

BY MARC SNETIKER



THE A-LIST TALENT
voicing your favorite characters!



DONALD GLOVER
as Simba



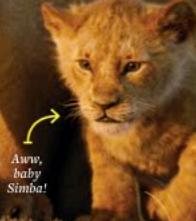
BEYONCÉ
as Nala



CHIWETEL EJIOFOR
as Scar



SETH ROGEN
as Pumbaa





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Inside director Jon Favreau's *The Lion King*; plus, exclusive intel on *Spider-Man: Far From Home*, *Dark Phoenix*, *Fast & Furious* Presents: *Hobbs & Shaw*, *Toy Story 4*, and more!

BY EW STAFF

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ON THE COVER

Mufasa and Simba in *The Lion King*.
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Keanu Reeves and his sword in *John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum*

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Sound Bites

TWEET OF THE WEEK



Lil Nas X
@LilNasX

"they act like 2 legends can't coexist"
—The rapper, rejecting someone's assertion
that his viral hit "Old Town Road" is better than
"Baby Shark"

LIL NAS X: ERIC LAGG/COLUMBIA RECORDS; RODRIGUEZ: SARAH SAWAYNEY/THE VICKS; LOUIS-DREYFS: ANDREW DOWD/NETFLIX; HARRING: JEFF HILL; SLOAN: SHANE EASTMAN; ISABELLA VASCONCELOS: BETT RICHARDS; JACK RYAN: ANDREW

"What am I supposed
to say, like,
'Hey, can I get your
father's number?'"

—Ramy (Ramy Youssef),
dismissing his mom's suggestion
that he meet a woman
at the mosque, on *Ramy*

"Kanye's the secret
headliner?... That's insane!
And a problematic choice."

—Jenny (Gina Rodriguez), experiencing
a roller coaster of emotions over
a big concert, in *Someone Great*

"What you need to do is
get me in front of huge white
audiences...something that
makes a NASCAR race look like
a Jay-Z concert, you know?"

—Selina (Julia Louis-Dreyfus), wanting
to improve her polling with a specific
demographic, on *Veep*

"The big
woman still
here?"

—Tormund (Kristofer Hivju),
arriving back at Winterfell
and immediately looking for
his crush, Brienne
(Gwendoline Christie), on
Game of Thrones

"Actually, ma'am,
Jay-Z concerts are
almost all
white people."

—Marjorie (Clea DuVall)

"It was like *Charlie's
Angels* without
the feathered hair and
casual sexism."

—Felicity (Emily Bett Rickards), summarizing the
female Birds of Justice team-up, on *Arrow*

"Well, what do you want me
to do—go to *John Wick*
assassin hotel with 'Help
Wanted' sign?"

—Noho Hank (Anthony Carrigan),
reacting to Barry's (Bill Hader)
failure to kill someone, on *Barry*

**SO SMOOTH
IT WILL MAKE YOU
FORGET ABOUT YOUR
AWKWARD YEARS.**



ALL 27 OF THEM.

NEW!



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STAFF PICKS

What summer movie are you most looking forward to?

**KATIE HASTY***Senior Editor, Movies***•MidSommer**

Ari Aster—the director behind *Hereditary*—plus cult horror in Sweden? The hills are alive with the sound of screaming.

**KERENZA CADENA***Staff Editor***•The Farewell**

I'll never forget my wife's *Awkwafina*, and I love a family dramedy. So Lulu Wang's new film, about a Chinese family making up a wedding to please their ailing grandmother, hits every sweet spot.

**CHUCK KERR***Deputy Design Director***•John Wick: Chapter 3—Parabellum**

Nothing respect for Spidey, but I can't wait for the return of Keanu Reeves' suit-wearing, ass-kicking, dog-loving assassin.

**ALISON WILD***Senior Associate Photo Editor***•Pokémon Detective Pikachu**

Ryan Reynolds voicing a Pikachu...with a call to action...wearing a deerstalker hat. Is this the greatest movie ever or my early-2000s fever dream?

**DAN MORRISSEY***Copy Chief***•Toy Story 4**

If I don't take my daughter Ona to it on opening day she's trading me in for a better dad.

**EVAN LEWIS***Reporter***•Spider-Man: Far From Home**

The first outing for an undusted Spider-Man (and Nick Fury) should be an exciting test of Marvel's post-*Endgame* game plan.

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This Cheap Trick record went gold and platinum, but it began as porcelain and tile.

This is the bathroom at Sound City studio in LA, where Cheap Trick recorded the guitars to their classic teen anthem "Surrender" in 1977. Named one of the Top 500 Songs of all time by Rolling Stone magazine, this power pop hit is still echoing out of that shower, reaching a new generation of listeners who might realize their parents aren't as nerdy as they seem.

This is B Studios, the untold story of the famous music recorded in bathrooms.



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B Studios
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The Must List

THE TOP 10 THINGS WE LOVE THIS WEEK Edited By | MARC SNETIKER @MARCSENTER



1

Music

PINK, HURTS 2B HUMAN

On her eighth album, the fearless singer delivers an exhilarating mix of proud anthems ("Hustle") and introspective ballads ("Happy"), as well as top-notch collaborations with Chris Stapleton, Nate Ruess, and Khalid. It *Hurts* so good.

PINK: MICHAEL TRAPANI/MAGIC



PINK

The acrobatic superstar, 39, currently on her Beautiful Trauma tour, talks to EW's Tim Stack about her new album, being a mom, and getting shot out of a cannon

What was the inspiration behind this album?

I am very much a mystery bag. You put your hands in me and you have no idea what you're gonna get out. That's just how I do it. I don't believe in genres. I just believe in music and speaking your heart. I usually go on tour and stop writing altogether, but we just never stopped.

Tell us a little about your title track, a duet with Khalid.

I feel like if you're present in 2019 and not totally escaping your feelings and you're looking around at what's going on in the world, especially this country, it hurts. It

CONTINUED

f---ing hurts your heart. I think that's a good thing, because that's what creates change, and we're starting to see change and people show up and fight back. I thought, 'God, this song needs Khalid,' and he said yes because his mom likes me. [Laughs] I love his voice, I love who he is. He's young and awesome and the sweetest person in the world. I always name the album after a song title, and this one felt the most true to what's going on right now.

The chorus to "Hustle" proclaims, "Don't... with me!" Who f---s with Pink?

My 2-year-old. [Laughs] And my 7-year-old. My husband. My friends. Everybody. I'm a total sucker. You think I'm a badass, but I'm all talk. People screw me every day.

Your live performances have featured you singing while doing incredible acrobatics. How are you going to top that?

I've been trying to figure that out. There was this one thing I wanted to do where these drones fly around on a magic carpet, but then everyone was like, "No, because hackers. They could just, like, steal you!" We talked about being shot out of a cannon. I didn't really feel comfortable with that. We're scratching our heads, but we're going to keep going. [Laughs] "For one night only, she lights herself on fire!"



Movies

AVENGERS: ENDGAME

It's both the end of an era and the start of an exciting new frontier in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. What will happen in the final Avengers film is anyone's guess (sadly, our psychic disintegrated at the end of *Infinity War*), and what happens afterward is the new fan debate du jour. But Phase 4 can wait—because it's time to experience the thrills, tears, and triumphs of seeing Iron Man, Cap, Thor, and the rest assemble for one last adventure together. (April 26)

PREMATURE ENDGAMES

We assume the fates of nine characters who disappeared from the MCU long before Thanos' snap

DARCY LEWIS

We like to think she's leading the fight for better working conditions for all Avenger-adjacent interns.



JANE FOSTER

Launched her own astrophysicist advice podcast; Jane Foster is Overqualified.



TREVOR SLATTERY

After being sprung from prison, started teaching the real Mandarin about personal brand-building.



KORG

Probably off leading some new planet in a totally—hopefully printing enough pamphlets this time.



THE SHAWARMA GUY

Rebuilt his restaurant after the Battle of New York, and launched a franchise with incredible Yelp reviews.



BETTY ROSS

Before disintegrating, taught Culver University's most popular class: Hulk and the Origins of Rage.



SHARON CARTER

Became a global superspy after her Aunt Peggy dumped Steve Rogers after he shaved his beard.



GRANDMASTER

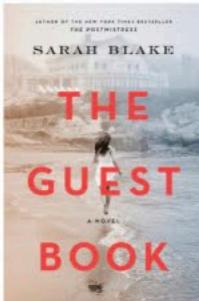
Closed down Sakaar's gladiator games and reopened the planet as an intergalactic outlet mall.



GOOSE THE "CAT"

TBD what happened after Captain Marvel, but Thanos better hope they don't cross paths or Endgame is going to be over real quick.



**Books**

THE GUEST BOOK

by Sarah Blake

The third novel from the author of *The Postmistress* is an American epic in the truest sense, spanning three generations of a powerful family that owns a small island off the coast of Maine. In the present day, Evie Milton uncovers the unsettling truth of her parents'—and their parents'—lives; in the process, Blake humanely but grippingly explores the heart of a country whose past is based in prejudice.

3

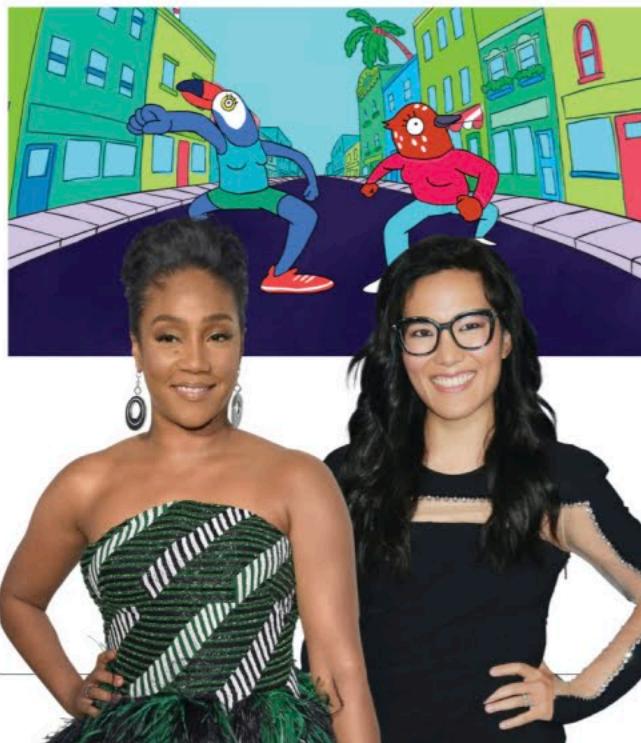
TUCA & BERTIE: NETFLIX; LAMWAN TANG/WIREIMAGE; WONG: LEON MENNELL/TITANMAGIC

4

TUCA & BERTIE

TV

Lisa Hanawalt defined the visual style of *BoJack Horseman*; now she's redrawing the rules of animation with this ecstatic avian friend-com. Tiffany Haddish voices free-spirited Tuca, crazy-making best pal of Ali Wong's neurotically settled Bertie. The joke-per-minute ratio is off the charts, with beyond-surreal plot twists and relentless sight gags that demand rewatching. It's a sweet city-life comedy—and one of the year's trippiest TV shows. (Netflix, May 3)



SUMMER MOVIE PREDICTIONS

1. WE WILL FEEL THE LOVE TONIGHT
2. MIDSOMMAR ENDS FLOWER-CROWN TREND
3. EMMA THOMPSON, MVP
4. ALEXA, WHAT IS "PARABELLUM"?



5 TV **DEAD TO ME**

Jen (Christina Applegate) and Judy (Linda Cardellini) are polar-opposite strangers who become friends thanks to a grief support group in this Netflix series created by Liz Feldman. On paper, it might sound like a generic laughtrack sitcom, but *Me* is far more moving, complicated, and unique. Applegate gives the performance of her career as an acidic widowed mother. She's heartbreaking and hilarious, much like *Me*. (May 3)

BIRTHDAY BUDDIES (APRIL 30)
Gal Gadot | Sam Heughan



Music

THE MUSIC OF UGLYDOLLS

Kelly Clarkson, Janelle Monáe, Nick Jonas, Blake Shelton: No, that's not the lineup of a music festival you can't afford, but a taste of the talented cast of STX's endearing animated film based on the popular doll line. It's no wonder the soundtrack is brimming with upbeat, body-positive bops. (May 3)



JANELLE MONÁE'S BEAUTIFUL TRUTH

The singer, 36, tells EW's Ruth Kinane about proudly singing out for the weirdos

What made you want to be part of *UglyDolls*?

The message: It's so clear: Embrace the things that make you unique, even if it makes others uncomfortable. The movie celebrates the outcasts and those who come from marginalized communities. Plus, my character Mandy and the *UglyDolls* get to take down a patriarchy. That's what I love about it.

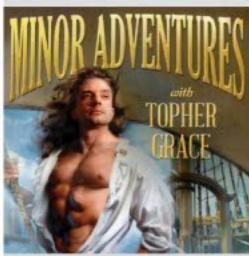
Tell us a bit about recording your songs.

"All Dolled Up" was just so fun to record, and "Unbreakable" [both duets with Clarkson] aims to encourage us through our darkest times and remind us we will prevail. We are indeed unbreakable.

What do you hope is the film's takeaway?

We've all had those moments where we didn't feel like we fit in. I think the film will start conversations around what it means to protect each other and love yourself even in times of opposition. Families can walk out feeling empowered.





Podcasts

MINOR ADVENTURES WITH TOPHER GRACE

From the producers of *Anna Faris Is Unqualified* comes this low-stakes, high-comedy treat led by the smooth-voiced Grace, who matches celebrity guests with expert-led excursions into the secret worlds of things like lie detectors, movie trailers, and Wilmer Valderrama. (New episodes every Sunday)

PODCASTING CALL

Seven more celebrity podcasts you should be listening to



THE RON BURGUNDY PODCAST

Will Ferrell's news-caster voice is all that matters in this ridiculously fun, totally unexpected extension of the Anchorman universe.



SHOWMANCE WITH KEVIN MC HAILE & JENNA USHKOWITZ

Glee's fan-favorite BFFs chat with other pairs of celebrity pals who

met their sometimes-not-platonic matches on set.



DAVID TENNANT DOES A PODCAST WITH...

The former Doctor is a dream of a host, landing fascinating guests like Ian McKellen, Whoopi Goldberg, and Olivia Colman. Simply an Anglophile's dream.

LAS CULTURISTAS

Get to know the names Bowen Yang and Matt Rogers, two rising comedians with keen insight into their fellow comic up-and-comers on their way to the top.

7

MORBITUARIES WITH MO ROCCA

Pop culture staple Rocca brings the research to this inquisitive, irreverent look at things we've lost, whether on this mortal plane or just in the zeitgeist.

SMALL DOSES WITH AMANDA SEALES

Insecure about nothing and everything, the actress brings big issues down to earth with her refreshing approach to the hard-to-discuss topics of race, gender, and self.

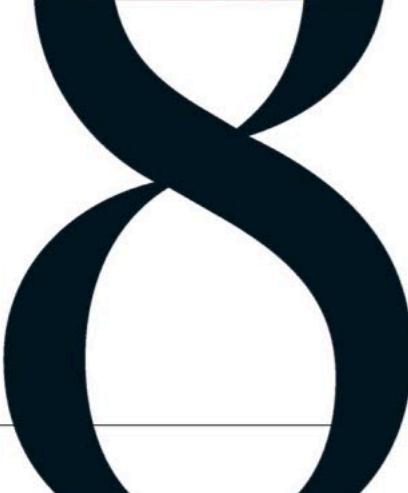
ARMCHAIR EXPERT WITH DAX SHEPARD

In its second year on the metaphorical air, Kristen Bell's husband acknowledges what the aforementioned celebs are all probably thinking: What do any of us really know?

Movies

LONG SHOT

Charlize Theron hits the rom-com campaign trail as Charlotte Field, a secretary of state with Oval Office ambitions who finds potential love in her new speechwriter Fred Flarsky, played by Seth Rogen. (He also happens to be the guy she used to babysit.) "Comedy, especially in this genre, is something I'm not necessarily that experienced with," Theron confesses. But after this delightful gem, you too might be chanting "Theron 2020." (May 3)



GAY OF THRONES

Hennies, lock up your dragons! Before he made makeover magic on *Queer Eye*, Jonathan Van Ness was *Funny or Die's* resident Game of Thrones recapper. He's back for season 8, with his acerbic weekly recaps of the twists, turns, and Westerosi tea that only JVN knows how to serve. (Tuesdays, funnyordie.com)



9



10

Movies

EXTREMELY WICKED, SHOCKINGLY EVIL AND VILE

Furthering the nation's obsession with true crime, Netflix's buzzy *Ted Bundy* biopic (starring Zac Efron) follows the serial killer's personal life and his relationship with unsuspecting girlfriend Liz (Lily Collins). Though it rehashes events that have since become folklore, Efron's embodiment of the murderer is worth the second look. (May 3)



ZAC EFRON

The actor, 31, tells EW's Sejal Rankin about the stress—and success—of playing Ted Bundy

What did you know about Bundy's crimes before this movie?

I knew the name was synonymous with evil. I knew that when I was growing up you would hear people reference him in an ominous, eerie way. And I knew the look on my mom's face when I told her that I was considering playing him—it was not a good look. But once I told her that the movie was not a depiction of evil and

atrocities, and that I wasn't necessarily exploring that side of it, I think everyone was more at ease.

How does true crime fit into your pop culture diet?

I love movies like *No Country for Old Men*, [set] back in the day when there was less technology. This [film]

is a look into who Ted Bundy was, but not the way that I think would have been the easy way, which was to talk about the murders. It's really from Liz's perspective and gets deep into [Bundy's] psyche and what it was like to lead [two] completely different lives.

Given the heaviness of the material, what was the vibe like on set?

Let's just say it was different than *The Greatest Showman*. The demeanor was very thoughtful and

serious. And you know what, the process of filmmaking is always, always an adventure. I was with careful people, but I continue to push myself to try new things and push the envelope with an acting career that I kind of stumbled into.

How do you possibly decompress from a role like this?

I did breathing and meditation. I think that's the only way. I really love TM—transcendental meditation—and I did it on the way home. Not while driving. [Laughs] But when you're shooting a movie, one thing we can afford is a ride home, so on the way home I just do some TM and try to phase out of it. Really, you can't ever let go of all of it. There's always a little bit of you that knows that tomorrow, you're Ted.

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Our Emmy Noms Predictions

Emmy season doesn't officially begin until June, but the campaigning—and prognosticating—is already in full swing. Here, EW critics

Kristen Baldwin and **Darren Franich** share their best guesses as to who will make the cut when the nominees are announced on July 16.

T

THE SMALL-SCREEN AWARDS SEASON NOW RUNS YEAR-
round, so trying to guess the Emmy nominees at this early stage is a fool's errand. But we're fools for great television! Prestige projects like *The Crown* and *The Handmaid's Tale* are taking this year off, while HBO's category-dominating gems *Game of Thrones* and *Veep* are taking one last (victory?) lap. So expect an exciting mix of first-time nominees alongside some very familiar faces—and a few surprises. You'll get to all these shows by September, we swear!

OUTSTANDING DRAMA SERIES

Can anything stop HBO's fantasy juggernaut from a fourpeat victory? Five of last year's nominees aren't competing, so an alliance of new challengers will attempt one final *de-Thrones-ing*.

- Better Call Saul (AMC)
- Game of Thrones (HBO)
- Homecoming
(Amazon Prime Video)
- Killing Eve (BBC America)
- Pose (FX)
- Succession (HBO)
- This Is Us (NBC)

OUTSTANDING COMEDY SERIES

Three-time winner Veep returns to duel with 2018 champ *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*. And *Better Things* will finally get its overdue first nomination in this category, right? Right.

- Barry (HBO)
- Better Things (FX)
- black-ish (ABC)
- GLOW (Netflix)
- The Kominsky Method (Netflix)

○ *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*
(Amazon Prime Video)

LEAD ACTRESS IN A DRAMA SERIES

Emilia Clarke previously competed in the supporting category. But general *Thrones* goodwill should power her into a category stuffed with legendary talents.

- Christine Baranski, *The Good Fight* (CBS All Access)
- Emilia Clarke, *Game of Thrones* (HBO)
- Jodie Comer, *Killing Eve* (BBC America)
- Laura Linney, *Ozark* (Netflix)
- Sandra Oh, *Killing Eve* (BBC America)
- Julia Roberts, *Homecoming* (Amazon Prime Video)
- Robin Wright, *House of Cards* (Netflix)

**LEAD ACTOR IN A
DRAMA SERIES**

Two Kings in the North (R.I.P. Robb!) could compete for the

DANIEL CRAVEN: CHRISTOPHER BAUDERSON/HORROR TIME, KILLING EVE, PARASIA, TAHOE, THE HOBGoblin, THE MARVELOUS MRS. MASSEL; NICKIE KINELU/AMAZON PRIME, KID DING: ENICA PARISE/SHOWTIME; INSECURE: MELISSA BROWN, WALLACE/HBO



same crown, but keep your eye on Bob Odenkirk, already nominated thrice for his ever-more-devastating work on *Better Call Saul*.

- Jason Bateman, *Ozark* (Netflix)
- Sterling K. Brown, *This Is Us* (NBC)
- Kit Harington, *Game of Thrones* (HBO)
- Stephan James, *Homecoming* (Amazon Prime Video)
- Richard Madden, *Bodyguard* (Netflix)
- Bob Odenkirk, *Better Call Saul* (AMC)
- Billy Porter, *Pose* (FX)

LEAD ACTRESS IN A COMEDY SERIES

Julia Louis-Dreyfus will almost certainly earn her seventh *Veep* acting Emmy for her last ride as former president Selina Meyer. And in a crowded field, don't count out Christina Applegate, doing career-best work on Netflix's twisty-sorrowful *Dead to Me*. ○ Pamela Adlon, *Better Things* (FX)

- Christina Applegate, *Dead to Me* (Netflix)
- Rachel Brosnahan, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* (Amazon Prime Video)
- Julia Louis-Dreyfus, *Veep* (HBO)
- Issa Rae, *Insecure* (HBO)
- Lily Tomlin, *Grace and Frankie* (Netflix)
- Phoebe Waller-Bridge, *Fleabag* (Amazon Prime Video)

LEAD ACTOR IN A COMEDY SERIES

Past winners Donald Glover (*Atlanta*) and Jeffrey Tambor (*Transparent*) aren't eligible this year, which leaves room for Ricky Gervais (*After Life*) and Jim Carrey (*Kidding*). As for perennial nominee William H. Macy? Something tells us the *Shameless* star is gonna sit this one out.

- Anthony Anderson, *black-ish* (ABC)
- Jim Carrey, *Kidding* (Showtime)
- Don Cheadle, *Black Monday* (Showtime)
- Ted Danson, *The Good Place* (NBC)

- Michael Douglas, *The Kominsky Method* (Netflix)
- Ricky Gervais, *After Life* (Netflix)
- Bill Hader, *Barry* (HBO)

OUTSTANDING LIMITED SERIES

Before you riot, *American Horror Story* fans, a quick disclaimer: In April, the Academy ruled that *AHS: Apocalypse* be "recategorized" as a drama series because it featured "continuing story threads, characters, and actors" from previous seasons.

- *Catch-22* (Hulu)
- *Escape at Dannemora* (Showtime)
- *Fosse/Verdon* (FX)
- *The Haunting of Hill House* (Netflix)
- *Sharp Objects* (HBO)
- *True Detective* (HBO)
- *A Very English Scandal* (Amazon Prime Video)

OUTSTANDING TELEVISION MOVIE

Lots of prestige contenders in this category, but it all comes down to old (the long, long-awaited *Deadwood* revival) versus new (*Black Mirror*'s choose-your-own-adventure experiment).

- *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* (Netflix)
- *Brexit* (HBO)
- *Deadwood: The Movie* (HBO)
- *King Lear* (Amazon Prime Video)
- *My Dinner With Hervé* (HBO)
- *Native Son* (HBO)
- *The Romanoffs: End of the Line* (Amazon Prime Video)

OUTSTANDING LEAD ACTRESS IN A LIMITED SERIES OR MOVIE

At 19, Joey King would be the youngest nominee in this category since 14-year-old Hannah Taylor Gordon was nominated in 2001 for ABC's *Anne Frank: The Whole Story*.

- Amy Adams, *Sharp Objects* (HBO)
- Patricia Arquette, *Escape at Dannemora* (Showtime)
- Connie Britton, *Dirty John* (Bravo)
- Joey King, *The Act* (Hulu)

- Helen Mirren, *Catherine the Great* (HBO)
- Michelle Williams, *Fosse/Verdon* (FX)
- Ruth Wilson, *Mrs. Wilson* (PBS)

OUTSTANDING LEAD ACTOR IN A LIMITED SERIES OR MOVIE

Since 2015, wins in this category have alternated between HBO and FX. Could Benicio Del Toro's crazy-good performance in *Dannemora* break the streak?

- Christopher Abbott, *Catch-22* (Hulu)
- Mahershala Ali, *True Detective* (HBO)
- Benicio Del Toro, *Escape at Dannemora* (Showtime)
- Hugh Grant, *A Very English Scandal* (Amazon Prime Video)
- Anthony Hopkins, *King Lear* (Amazon Prime Video)
- Ian McEwan, *Deadwood: The Movie* (HBO)
- Sam Rockwell, *Fosse/Verdon* (FX)

WHAT SHOULD BE ON THE LIST

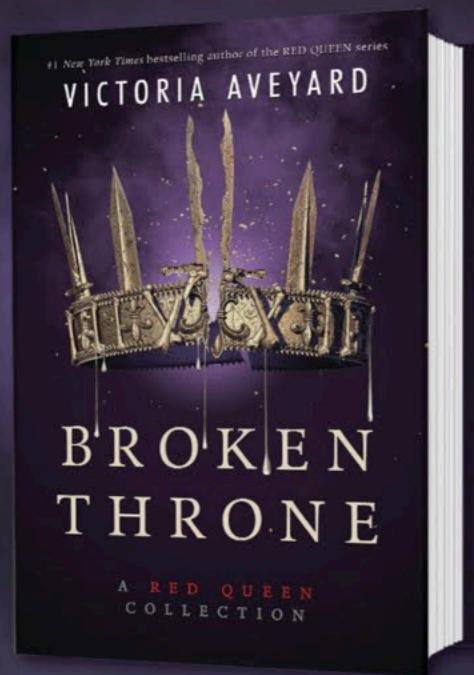
EW staffers think these dark-horse contenders (and their superb casts) deserve Emmy attention

- *I'm Sorry* (trtTV)
- *Narcos: Mexico* (Netflix)
- *The Other Two* (Comedy Central)
- *Schitt's Creek* (Pop)
- *Sorry for Your Loss* (Facebook Watch)
- *YOU* (Lifetime)



▲ (Clockwise from top left) Schitt's Creek's Catherine O'Hara; Narcos: Mexico's Michael Peña; Sorry for Your Loss' Elizabeth Olsen

VISIT THE WORLD OF
THE RED QUEEN SERIES
ONE LAST TIME!



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Epic Reads

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY PRESENTS

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW

Lions and Spiders and scares, oh my! Summer 2019 is packed with romance, action, horror, thrills, and—woof!—so many dogs (plus big cats in **The Lion King**).

Fall in love with **The Sun Is Also a Star** in May, **Dark Phoenix** in June, **Spider-Man** in July, and **Hobbs & Shaw** in August, with plenty more in between.

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TRAILER PERKS Hover your phone's camera over this code to watch trailers for all the films in our summer preview

RETURN OF



Simba (JD McCrary)
and Mufasa
(James Earl Jones)
survey everything
the light touches

THE

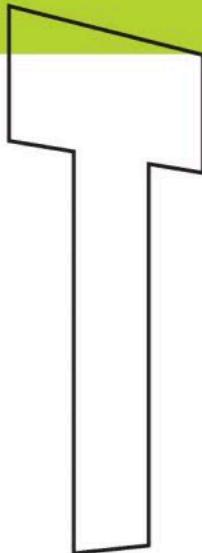
KING

LEGACY CAN BE A BEAST, WHETHER IT'S FOR A
YOUNG LION PRINCE WALKING IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS
OR A FILMMAKING TEAM REIMAGINING ONE OF
THE MOST TREASURED ANIMATED MOVIES
OF ALL TIME. STEP INSIDE DIRECTOR JON FAVREAU'S

The Lion King,

THE WILDEST DISNEY REMAKE THIS SIDE OF
THE SAVANNAH.

BY MARC SNETIKER @MarcSnetiker

**STARRING**

Donald Glover,
Beyoncé Knowles-
Carter, James
Earl Jones

DIRECTED BY

Jon Favreau

RELEASE DATE

7.19

The elephant in the room is that there's no elephant in the room. Or lion, hyena, or zebra, for that matter. In fact, it's quite possible there are no indigenous African animals anywhere whatsoever within a 25-mile radius of this Playa Vista, Calif., production facility. And yet there are roars and squawks and grunts and growls sounding out from all corners of this secluded little studio, and if a visiting tourist knows where to look, they may even spot a majestic creature up on screen with fur so fine, skin so textured, and eyes so exquisitely piercing that they'd bet their kingdom the animal was real.

The blurriness of reality has never looked sharper than in Disney's July 19 temple *The Lion King*, a summer blockbuster-in-the-making (again!) that refreshes a classic movie with a pioneering photo-real animation technology for a film experience that will be, simply, wild. As the latest animated Disney film to be reimaged for new audiences (in a string of "live-action" remakes that has earned more than \$5 billion since 2010), *The Lion King* has had the Hollywood herd on high alert since the studio first announced its intent three years ago to remake the 1994 cartoon epic with Jon Favreau directing. The filmmaker's photo-realistic adaptation of *The Jungle Book* wowed audiences in 2016, using cutting-edge tools to bring exotic animals to astonishing animated life (a technology Favreau's team has only further developed since). But even Favreau would tell you: The jungle and the savannah are two vastly different beasts, and no beast roars louder than *The Lion King*.

Released in June 1994, the original film remains the highest-grossing hand-drawn animated movie ever made. It was the No. 1 movie worldwide that year and Disney's biggest-ever opening weekend at the time. It would make pop culture history at the Oscars (winning for Hans Zimmer's score and Elton John and Tim Rice's song "Can You Feel the Love Tonight?"); on stage (where the 1997 Broadway musical is, per *Forbes*, the most profitable entertainment property ever created); in stores (where the



An exiled Simba (Donald Glover) contemplates the constellations with Pumbaa (Seth Rogen) and Timon (Billy Eichner)

haul from total merchandise sales exceeded \$1 billion in its first year alone); and even at cinemas again (when a 3-D rerelease set theatrical records in 2011). The simplest explanation for its success is its story: a *Hamlet*-inspired, African-set fable of a young lion prince named Simba forced to fill the vast footprints of his late father, the fallen king Mufasa. It's a classic journey, heroic and universal, and while that certainly hasn't changed 25 years later in Favreau's adaptation (penned by Jeff Nathanson), this lion cub is about to come of age in a whole new Africa.

"It feels like we're restoring an architectural landmark—how do you take advantage of all the new technological breakthroughs, but still maintain the soul and the spirit of



the original *Lion King*?" Favreau, 52, tells EW on set. "I think this film is a culmination of all the live-action adaptations that Disney has done of their animated classics. And by the time *Jungle Book* was done, we had a lot of facility with this technology, so you're hitting that part of your stride where you're saying, 'Now, what can I *really* do with this?'"

Much of Favreau's trailblazing technical team from *Jungle Book* has returned for another trip to the animal kingdom, but there's one big caveat. While *Jungle Book* counted a flesh-and-blood human (Neel Sethi as Mowgli) among its characters—hence, "live-action"—Favreau has no human star this time around. So despite what you may have heard about Disney's "live-action *Lion King*," be prepared to leave

that label behind and get acquainted with another phrase in filmmaking: virtual production. "By removing the one physical element of Mowgli, we were no longer tethered to the fact that we had to have bluescreen or an actual set or real cameras, so everything became virtual at that point," Favreau explains. "We've basically built a multiplayer VR filmmaking game just for the purposes of making this movie."

To get to the set of *The Lion King*, simply pop on a virtual-reality headset (like EW did way, way back in the summer of 2017). Look upward and you realize you're at the bottom of Pride Rock, the film's majestic mountain centerpiece. A few hundred feet above you, Favreau's VR avatar (a blue humanoid ball...thing) floats in the sky

beside it, watching a scene play out between two lions on the rocky peak. Animators have used key-frame CGI and the recorded dialogue of actors to create a master animation of today's scene, in which Mufasa (James Earl Jones, reprising his 1994 role) teaches young Simba (JD McCrary) about the bounds of the kingdom he'll one day inherit. While each "take" of the animated Mufasa's performance is the same, the VR technology has afforded Favreau the freedom to shoot the action from any nook, cranny, or even midair vista view of Pride Rock. Every set piece, from elephant graveyards to exotic waterfalls, can be as meticulously explored as any open-world 3-D videogame, allowing the director, his director of photography Caleb Deschanel, and his crew to scout



locations together in real time. They can establish their shots, just as they would on a physical set, but without having to relocate heavy camera units, chase the light of a dwindling sun, or coerce animal actors into doing their scenes once more with feeling.

"The whole reason for all of this is to make an animated film feel live-action—to have a real crew make all the camera decisions that you would on set, instead of somebody sitting at a keyboard programming in the camera moves," Favreau explains. What he's searching for is a style of film photography that marries state-of-the-art animation with the kind of gorgeous, gritty cinematography you'd see in a nature documentary. Kinetic, impulsive camerawork capturing beautifully rendered animal behavior. An imperfect shot of perfect action.

If it's all still hard to visualize, then Favreau says *hakuna matata*. "The hope is that none of this will matter when people see it," he concedes. "We hope it will feel like something different and something that's as emotionally engaging as a film with real animals using real cameras. And as we introduce the material to people, they'll begin to understand—or at least be confused in a way that's creatively compelling."

The thing is, you just can't mess with *The Lion King*.

Not because of its quantifiable metrics or its grand Shakespearean undertones, but for the particular pristine nostalgia it holds among young and millennial audiences as a formative film that dealt with fatal themes. "I once heard it referred to as the crown jewel of the Disney movies, and for me at least, it's for sure the one that hit me the hardest and taught me the most lessons about life and death and many things in between," says Seth Rogen, 37, who voices Simba's no-worries warthog pal Pumbaa. "Whenever Jon has shown me [footage], I weep uncontrollably because it just hits a raw nerve in some ways and taps directly into these feelings from my childhood, but updates them with a scope that is heavily impactful to me as an adult."

In that regard, Favreau's cast and crew are filled with Seth Rogenesque fervent, vocal fans who reminded the filmmaker of his precarious spot at the intersection of hands-on visual reinvention and hands-off narrative preservation. But can you teach an old lion new tricks? "It's amazing how much you can change, but if you reference the proper memory points, it feels like you're completely being true to what came before," says Favreau. "The trick is to quantify those things. Figure out those connection points.

Glover (right) takes vocal direction from safari guide Jon Favreau



THE LION KING © 2019 THE LION KING LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CREDIT: CLAUDIO EDINGER



Oliver as royal adviser Zazu, Alfre Woodard as queen Sarabi, John Kani as mystic mandrill Rafiki, and Eric André, Florence Kasumba, and Keegan-Michael Key as Scar's now-terrifying crew of hyena cronies.

Even the cast can't believe the cast. "I think I screamed when I found out Beyoncé was going to be in the movie," says Shahadi Wright Joseph, 14, who voices young Nala. "And when I found out she was going to be playing older me, I really had to step my game up and think about what Beyoncé would want." McCrary, 11, who pads around the Pride Lands as young Simba, gushes, "Donald Glover is so talented that I actually did have to take it into consideration, because if Simba is going to grow up to be some sort of figure and you know it, you have to keep that motive." Ejiofor raves of the towering Jones: "For those of us who

grew up with James Earl Jones and his voice, the comfort of that is going to be very rewarding in taking us on this journey again. It's a once-in-a-generation vocal quality."

The characters themselves are just as iconic as the celebrities playing them; names like Simba, Rafiki, Timon, and Scar have spent nearly a quarter century etched into pop culture, presenting the actors with both a daunting and thrilling opportunity to reinvent. "There are a lot of roles I don't think I'm right for, even in movies I'm making, but Pumbaa was one I knew I could do

well," beams Rogen, whom Favreau emailed with a casting offer shortly after the film's announcement. "Truthfully, I probably would have been a little insulted if he *didn't* ask me to." Eichner was slightly less assured. "People way more famous and successful than me would have killed for this part. I've heard about some of them!" admits the actor, 40, who counts Nathan Lane—the original portrayer of meerkat Timon—as a personal musical hero. "But the bigger the names, the more you have to ignore it. If you get to the soundstage and you're thinking,

66

You would spend the first 25 minutes of a [voice] session just talking with Jon about how all of this was being achieved. The technology just seemed so next-generation and out-there." —CHIWETEL EJIOFOR



Scar (Chiwetel Ejiofor) and his hungry hyenas prepare to pounce

Favreau earmarked the film's music as its other major arena ripe for renewal. With all five songs from the 1994 film (including "Be Prepared" and "I Just Can't Wait to Be King") featured again, he hoped to spark collaborative magic by reuniting the original music team of Zimmer, John, and arranger Lebo M. to revisit their work alongside the new influences of Childish Gambino and Mrs. Carter. "Having Donald Glover and Beyoncé involved, not trying to create new songs but trying to build on what people remember and love about the old ones, has been really fun and formative," says Favreau.

Zimmer, faced with reevaluating his Oscar-winning score, was hesitant to return—"I have worked very hard to not ruin things through improvement," he says—but as he performed the music of *The Lion King* during his live concert tour over the past three years, he began to accept this circle of second life. "We had been playing the same notes, but we were putting all our emotion, all our humanity into it—we weren't playing a movie—and so I suddenly realized what my place in this new version was: to try a big experiment and use my band and orchestra, go back to Africa, work with Lebo and the musicians from all over the world, and really make this a performance," says the composer, 61. "If there is one story in the world I can think of at this very moment that can lend itself to truly becoming an experience, it is this. I am doing this strictly for the people for whom it means something. I'm working my musicians to the bone because I want to smell sweat and blood in this studio."

An argument isn't just an argument when it's between two lions. "There's something quite interesting in knowing that you're always holding a lethal capacity," muses Ejiofor, 41, who describes his diabolical version of Scar as more "psychologically possessed" and "brutalized" than the cartoon counterpart. "Especially with Scar, whether it's a vocal quality that allows for a certain confidence or a certain aggression, to always know that at the end of it you're playing somebody who has the capacity to turn everything on its head in a split second with outrageous acts of violence...that can completely change the temperature of a scene." Fang notwithstanding, Favreau's actors were directed to eschew any guesses of animal behavior and treat their beasts as humanely as humanly possible—a relief, for some. "I wasn't sure if I was going in there and—no pun intended—hamming it up," says Rogen. "The physicality of Pumbaa is so unanalogous that it thankfully just did not seem like me crawling around on all fours was the best idea. Also, I was lying, pun was intended."

All things animal were left in the paws of the animators. Each scene began with Favreau directing the actors in a black-box theater rigged with microphones like a live sitcom taping (except Jones, who recorded his part in a studio in New York). Those sessions became the actual vocals used in the film, and any camera footage became a reference for the animators to translate the performers' motions—expressions, gestures, distances, hesitations—into animal equivalents. "All those little subtle cues that actors give, animals have their version of; so what a human would do with its face, a lion might do with its whole body," Favreau expounds. The animators created master animations for each story beat, which would then be loaded into the VR and filmed, at which point the actors could enter the virtual stage and see how their scenes were

'Oh my God, what a full-circle moment! Nathan Lane did it originally! Beyoncé's in this!' then you're paralyzed creatively. You just have to put that out of your head in order to get the job done."

Yet for a star of Beyoncé's stature, the scrappy virtual-reality stage of *The Lion King* is arguably the most intimate she's performed on in years. Favreau calls the singer's persona "bigger than life" but cites her dedication to her family as a key motivation in her joining the cast: "Part of it is that she's got young kids, part of it is that it's a story that feels good for this phase of her life and her career, and she really likes the original very much. And then, of course, there are these wonderful musical numbers that she can be involved with, and my God...she really lives up to her reputation as far as the beauty of her voice and talent."

THE LION QUEEN

Mufasa isn't the only reigning royal in these Pride Lands. The internet bowed down when Beyoncé Knowles-Carter joined The Lion King as the older version of Nala, Simba's childhood friend and future queen. "I've got the Beyhive in my house," says Jon Favreau with a laugh, adding that he reached out to the singer purely on a whim and got an enthusiastic, savvy cast member and collaborator in return.

"Whenever she came by to work on it, she was incredibly curious about the technology, and as I showed her the techniques, she rolled up her sleeves and got into the VR and started to mess around with the tools," the director recalls. "I think, like most people who are at the pinnacle of their industry, she has a really good sense of how new

things can inform other things she's working on. Lemonade was happening around the time we were just beginning to work together, and you could see how art and filmmaking and fashion and music were all interweaving for her."

While the director had always hoped to work, Beyoncé's expertise into the film's soundtrack, he was surprised to add certain elements of the singer's influence to her animated performance. "When I would see her stage shows, it gave me ideas," says Favreau. "As I've been directing the animation, ideas cropped up, seeing what she was doing as a performer and how that could inform the character that she plays." Technically speaking, Nala did encourage Simba to put a ring on it.

—MARC SNETIKER

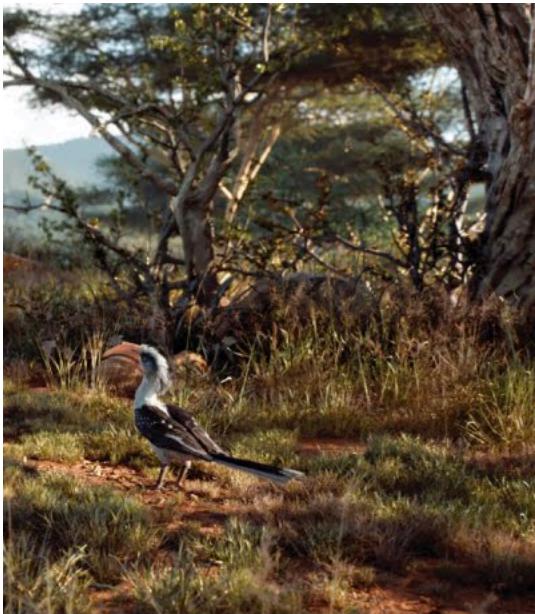
—MARC SNETIKER



progressing (or, per Favreau's signature belief in iteration, take another stab at recording). "It was really amazing," Glover says of the director's techniques. "I've never seen anything like it. To be able to have that type of mobility in an actual world is the first of its kind, I think. How he melded new and old tech was really inspiring."

Just as significant was Favreau's simple act of letting actors record together—a rarity in animation, but one that can unlock key character dynamics, like with Timon and Pumbaa. In *The Lion King's* translation from colorful cartoon to photo-real docu-chic, it's Eichner and Rogen as the film's comic relief who embody the project's challenging mission of calibrating the proper tone. "The aesthetic style is so wildly different that there are certain aspects of that type of voice-over acting that Nathan Lane and [original Pumbaa] Ernie Sabella did which would, great as it is, feel completely out of place in this version," says Eichner. "Nathan and Ernie were coming out of a legendary production of *Guys and Dolls* on Broadway, and they really leaned into that old-school, vaudeville, Borscht Belt-inspired sensibility for Timon and Pumbaa. Seth and I are not coming out of a production of *Guys and Dolls*. But I think overall our dynamic is more conversational—I'm not saying it's *subtle*, but it is conversational." (Rogen equates the Timon-Pumbaa relationship to something more akin to marriage: "Like any two people who spend a lot of time together, they start to have things that bother one another about each other.")

Other characters needed no such reinvention. "James Earl Jones would do a take and then ask me for direction, and I honestly couldn't give an answer!" Favreau exclaims. "I was like, 'You're Mufasa!' Everything he said sounded perfect because it was him saying it." Even now, the director still can't quite believe that Jones agreed to join the film. "He could have just as easily said no. His voice could have sounded different. There's a lot of



Simba (McCrory) and Nala (Shahadi) Wright Joseph) field a lecture from Zazu (John Oliver)

ways this could not have worked out. And that all of the stars aligned and there I was listening to him record... I felt something very powerful happening. And it's very hard to do your job during those moments when you just get lost in it."

casting of predominantly black actors adds a powerful dimension to a piece that, in 1994, found its African princes in Matthew Broderick and Jonathan Taylor Thomas (no shade, but still). *"The Lion King* is a wonderful opportunity to bring in a cast of black actors to play these extraordinary iconic roles," says Ejiofor. "Obviously, I feel very connected to anything African because of my heritage, and that's why it's a very special experience to me. It's wonderful that both Jon Favreau and Disney have really pushed to engage with that kind of casting." Wright Joseph adds: "Representation is really important because you have all of these amazing characters inspiring little black girls and black boys. I [know] Nala inspires little girls because that happened to me when I was younger. I literally said that I wanted to be her. She's a great role model."

There's a cultural impact to be had, as Glover, Ejiofor, and others agree that the

The film community also feels the ground rumbling as Favreau breaks into new technology. Some on *The Lion King's* production team compare the moviemaking techniques to the industry-wide disruption of James Cameron's *Avatar* in 2009; even veterans of *The Jungle Book*, dubbed a game changer just three years ago for blurring the line between artifice and authenticity, acknowledge how they've topped themselves (which also falls in line with the insatiable philosophy of tech-obsessed Walt Disney). "The time was ripe to do this, but no one was doing it," says three-time Oscar-winning visual-effects supervisor Robert Legato. "This was a push to make a film that broke the conventions of what you'd imagine these types of films could be, and it's just literally force of will. Everybody does VFX movies, everybody does animated movies, everybody does live-action movies—but to mix all of them together to make something that belies how it was done is, I think, the game-changing portion of all this."

All the while, outside the technical stage, Walt's legacy of meaningful family storytelling lives on. "Isn't this how we're supposed to spend our lives? Aren't we supposed to try to do excellent things and have a good laugh while we're doing them?" says Zimmer. "We're truly not doing it for the money. We're not doing it for the record sales. We're doing it because we have to. Because we have to give back to this audience that has supported this story all these years."

Royal procedure would suggest that *The Lion King*, both the original and now its heir, have a long reign ahead yet. "Seth and I looked at each other early on and said, 'No matter what else we do in our lives, more people around the world for years, decades, maybe centuries to come will hear our voices in this than they'll see us in anything else we ever do,'" says Eichner. "Long after we're gone, this movie will be seen by children who haven't even been born yet. So all you can really do is sit back and laugh at the absurdity of how enormous it is."

Enormous. Revered. Impossible to forget. Ah, there's that elephant. ♦

BB

What's wonderful about the original is the tonal variety: There's Mufasa's death, but also 'I Just Can't Wait to Be King.' There's the humor of Timon and Pumbaa, but also the heaviness and the responsibility of a hero's journey. And that's what we have to honor. —JON FAVREAU

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW

MAY



THE SUN IS ALSO A STAR



Natasha (Yara Shahidi)
and Daniel (Charles
Melton) fall in love

STARRING
Yara Shahidi,
Charles Melton

DIRECTED BY
By Russo-Young

RELEASE DATE
5.17

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- *Booksmart* p.33
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- *Rocketman* p.35
- *Brightburn* p.36
- *Always Be My Maybe* p.36



"It's a love story, but at the center of it you're watching this young girl grow up," Shahidi says of her character, Natasha

IT ALL STARTED WITH A POP-TART.

A homemade strawberry Pop-Tart, to be exact. Yara Shahidi (*grown-ish*) and Charles Melton (*Riverdale*) were taking a break in the middle of their chemistry read for *The Sun Is Also a Star* when he asked for a bite of her dessert. "I will give you literally anything I own, except my dessert," Shahidi says of her general food-sharing philosophy. "He asked for some, and it was an anomaly of a moment for me because I said yes. That was the beginning of our bond, because it was really out of character for me."

Bonding is the central ingredient in the love story of Natasha Kingsley and Daniel Bae. Based on Nicola Yoon's 2016 book, *The Sun Is Also a Star* follows the teenagers for a (very important) day in both of their young adult lives. Daniel, a Korean-American, is preparing for a college interview, and Jamaican-born Natasha has 24 hours to stop her family from being deported. But when Natasha and Daniel

meet for the very first time on the streets of New York City, they can't help but wonder if they were meant to be together. Or at least Daniel can't. "I loved the way the gender roles are reversed," director Ry Russo-Young says. "As a female director, you read a lot of scripts that are very traditional. In this, she's the science nerd, and he's the romantic and the poet."

And while Shahidi, 19, was Russo-Young's first choice for the part of Natasha, finding Daniel took a little bit of help from social media. After Yoon posted on Instagram asking fans who should play the two leads, Melton woke up to an overwhelming amount of notifications. Melton then took a screenshot of the post, sent it to his reps, and asked for the script. "That same day I bought the book and read it," Melton, 28, says. Essentially, Melton fell for Daniel faster than Daniel falls for Natasha. "Daniel's very endearing. There's a sensitive side to him that he's not afraid of. I found a lot of similarities with who I am as a

person. Have I told somebody 'I love you' after a day? Yes. Don't judge me."

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Natasha and Daniel aren't quite ready to say "I love you." Early last July on the movie's set, Melton and Shahidi filmed a scene in New York's Koreatown. Natasha has a couple of hours to kill before her appointment with an immigration lawyer, and Daniel is using that time to ask her question after question; before this day is done, he's determined to know her. But in between the standard "getting to know someone" inquiries, they find themselves discussing identity and what it is to feel American when others don't see you that way. "To be able to have the story line about deportation and cultural identity at the same time as a story line about love is what I really appreciate," Shahidi says of the script.

And if those weren't enough issues to tackle, the film also takes on the very idea of fate. When Yoon sat down to write the book, she says she wanted to touch on "how everything was connected." And that's one of the things that drew Russo-Young in. "I loved the fact that the book explored love in New York City and the topic of immigration, and the fact that it also wrestled with these bigger themes of the universe and destiny and the odds of two people finding each other in this big, crazy world," Russo-Young says. Because, if you really think about it, a lot has to happen for two complete strangers to bump into each other on a sidewalk in one of the world's most populated cities—life's not always as simple as sharing a Pop-Tart. —SAMANTHA HIGHFILL

“

Growing up, I never saw the male lead be an Asian in Hollywood. I'd get references like, 'You're Jackie Chan or Bruce Lee.' To see the love interest being Asian is so exciting. —CHARLES MELTON

Ma

STARRING
Octavia Spencer,
Juliette Lewis,
Diana Silvers

DIRECTED BY
Tate Taylor

RELEASE DATE
5.31

ALL IT TOOK FOR OCTAVIA SPENCER TO BOARD MA WAS THE prospect of reversing an age-old stereotype. "Black people always die in the first 15 minutes of a horror film," the actress says, recalling her initial skepticism upon hearing longtime friend and collaborator Tate Taylor's (*The Help*) pitch for a disturbing, darkly funny revenge story. "He said, 'Not only do you not die, you get to kill people!'"

Spencer immediately dove into the psyche of the titular loner who befriends a group of rowdy high schoolers, offering the basement of her isolated home as a safe space for their partying. Teenage debauchery quickly turns to bloody butchery, however, after their concerned parents unexpectedly trigger Ma's past trauma. "Because certain things happened in her life, there's a domino effect for her future," she teases.

Taylor, who revamped the character (originally a sadistic white woman) to suit Spencer, compares Ma's tone to the "goofiness of *Misery*" mixed with classic teen movies of the '80s. But genre tropes weren't the only thing the duo subverted. "There are archetypes people only want to see me as," Spencer adds. ("Wise characters" wearing "period wigs and costumes," as Taylor explains it.) "So I had to change that for myself [and] the next young woman of color to be able to play every type of role." Fittingly, Taylor calls the film a "cautionary tale" about the mistreatment of women. "Don't brush them under the rug and think there won't be repercussions," he teases. "Not with Ma!" —JOEY NOLFI

Octavia Spencer admits she was rattled by the "completely disturbing" acts she performs on teenage victims in *Ma*—like ironing this poor young man's stomach



Fun fact: Godzilla always has a sub for lunch

Godzilla: King of the Monsters

STARRING
Kyle Chandler,
Vera Farmiga,
Millie Bobby
Brown

DIRECTED BY
Michael
Dougherty

RELEASE DATE
5.31

In this sequel to 2014's *Godzilla*, humanity faces fresh dangers from the monster forms of Mothra, Rodan, the three-headed King Ghidorah, and (as director Michael Dougherty hints) maybe some other beasties as well. "I love the idea that these creatures represent an entire ecosystem," says the filmmaker. Can—and will—*Godzilla* help the puny humans? That query is addressed in a sequence that finds a submarine making contact with the G-man (pictured above). "The whole story ponders whether or not humans and *Godzilla* could potentially coexist together, or even possibly form an alliance," says Dougherty. "This particular moment answers that question."

—CLARK COLLIS

ALADDIN

BEHIND THE LOOK

■ Reimagining Disney's animated classic *Aladdin* for a live-action version meant a whole new wardrobe for Jasmine. Costume designer Michael Wilkinson and actress Naomi Scott discuss the key motifs and silhouettes of Jasmine's outfits that reflect a more modern look for Agrabah's princess. BY PIYA SINHA-ROY



① GOING INCOGNITO

Itching to escape the palace confines and wander Agrabah's markets, Jasmine borrows a breezy outfit modeled on the Indian salwar kameez—a tunic over tapered trousers—from her handmaiden Dalia. "Rather than putting her in a big dark cape, where she would stand out because the people in the marketplace are quite colorful and bright, we thought we'd have fun with this," says Wilkinson. For Scott, it was the pop of yellow and bright hem that made the outfit. "Sometimes the simpler costumes are the ones you just love the most," she says.

② MEET THE PRINCESS

When suitors flock to the palace to ask for Jasmine's hand in marriage, she dons a striking magenta gown with a five-foot train, accented with turquoise and embroidered with gold coins. The gown's restrictive but decorative bodice reflects the formality of the situation. Scott says wearing it was "very uncomfortable but incredibly impressive and worth it." Yet Jasmine is no ordinary princess. The gown hides a pair of turquoise trousers. "I was always very, very adamant that the more trousers, the better," Wilkinson says, "as to me, that is Jasmine's trademark."

③ UNDER THE MOON

As Jasmine awaits her meeting with Prince Ali (Aladdin in disguise) in the palace courtyard, she wears a vibrant magenta and coral gown. "[Ali] has promised to meet her secretly and ends up not turning up, so she gets stood up," Wilkinson says. "I knew I had to create something very special for this moment." The dress, which draws from Scott's South Asian heritage, is more free-flowing than Jasmine's other more structured, regal outfits. "There was one picture taken, and it looked like it was from a Bollywood movie," Scott says.

UPCOMING MOVIE PREVIEW
MAY

STARRING Mena Massoud, Naomi Scott, Will Smith	DIRECTED BY Guy Ritchie	RELEASE DATE 5.24
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4 TRENDY IN TURQUOISE

Jasmine's iconic turquoise crop top and harem pants are in the canon of Disney-princess costumes, and Wilkinson and Scott knew they had to do them justice. Wilkinson updated the look with a flesh-colored bodice and pants embroidered with peacock feathers. "[Jasmine] wants to support and fight for her country and have a sense of freedom...[like] a beautiful peacock trapped in the royal court, a golden cage," Wilkinson says. Scott (pictured with Nasim Pedrad as Dalia) adds, "It's keeping that demure feel whilst still having beauty and opulence and sassiness."

RODRIGUET/FRANCOIS DUHAMEL/ANNAPURNA PICTURES



Stars Beanie Feldstein (left) and Kaitlyn Dever lived together during the filming of *Booksmart* to make their onscreen friendship more believable

Booksmart

STARRING Beanie Feldstein, Kaitlyn Dever	DIRECTED BY Olivia Wilde	RELEASE DATE 5.24
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AS A TEENAGER, IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE TOO DEDICATED TO YOUR schoolwork? That's the question at the heart of *Booksmart*, Olivia Wilde's directorial debut that follows high school seniors Molly (Beanie Feldstein) and Amy (Kaitlyn Dever), brilliant best friends who realize their determination to be good students means they've missed out on a crucial part of the high school experience: partying. "I feel like I've never seen one of these characters at the center of a comedy, let alone two of them," Feldstein says. "The smart, engaged girl is often a secondary character." This time, not only are smart girls front and center but they have one night before graduation to make up for four years of good decisions. Think of it as a coming-of-age story, albeit a rushed one. "Teen comedies were our inspirations," Dever says. "We watched *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* before we made the movie just to prep." Except *Booksmart* has a very different kind of pool scene. —SAMANTHA HIGHFILL

ASIA KATE DILLON

SUMMER STAR Q&A

JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 3—PARABELLUM

STARRING

Keanu Reeves,
Ian McShane,
Asia Kate Dillon

DIRECTED BY

Chad Stahelski

RELEASE DATE

5.17

■ In the action threequel *John Wick: Chapter 3—Parabellum*, franchise veterans Keanu Reeves and Ian McShane are joined by Halle Berry, Anjelica Huston, and *Billions* star Asia Kate Dillon. Below, Dillon (who identifies as nonbinary) talks about their crucial role as the Adjudicator, and what happens when you mess with the High Table.

You play a character called "The Adjudicator" in *John Wick: Chapter 3—Parabellum*. What exactly are you adjudicating?

The Adjudicator works for the High Table, this mysterious ruling group of people who manage the world of John Wick. Nothing happens without the knowledge of the High Table, no matter how much people wish, or think, that they can be evasive or invisible. The Adjudicator is sent in to let various people know that they have broken the rules and that they're going to have to suffer the consequences of their actions.

because, to quote the Adjudicator, "Without rules we are no better than the animals."

How did you get cast in the role?

One of the producers, Basil [Wanyk], is a big fan of *Billions*. I went in and I met with Chad [Stahelski, the director], and then I had another meeting with Keanu, and then they said, "Welcome aboard."

When you first met with Keanu, was there a moment when you thought, "Holy s---, I'm taking a meeting with Keanu Reeves!"?

Keanu is so humble, and so vulnerable, and he's so intelligent. [It] was less like "Holy s---, it's Keanu!" and more "Wow, this is an incredible person that I'm excited to have a conversation with."

Your character on *Billions* dresses very conservatively. What kind of clothes did you get to wear on this movie?

The fashion in this film is so incredible. My character gets to wear mostly vintage Thierry Mugler, which was a real thrill. I love those clothes. It is very high-fashion, very European, very femme. As you said, Taylor on *Billions* dresses very conservatively. It was fun to step into a different character, a different costume, literally.

What's next for you?

I'm working on a music EP. I don't play any instruments, but singing has always been something that I've loved. I've had this idea for an EP for a little while now, and I'm just starting to reach out to a few producers.

—CLARK COLLIS

Laurence Fishburne, Jason Mantzoukas, and Asia Kate Dillon have a showdown





JOHN NICE: CHAPTER 2: PARAFELLOMI AND TAVERNE/ELIJAH GATE, DILLON KERBY HALL/UNIVERSAL/IMAGE, ROCKETMAN: JAVIN BOND/ARMOUNT

MUSIC MOVIE PREVIEW
MAY



"He's incredible at what he does," says Taron Egerton of *Rocketman* costume designer Julian Day. "His work was a real key in unlocking my version of Elton."

Rocketman

STARRING

Taron Egerton,
Richard Madden,
Bryce Dallas
Howard

DIRECTED BY

Dexter
Fletcher

RELEASE DATE

5.31

"WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO DESIGN A FILM ABOUT ELTON JOHN and his life?" says *Rocketman* costume designer Julian Day. "He's pretty much the most flamboyant rock star that has ever lived." Day is no stranger to theatrical musicians after working on last year's *Bohemian Rhapsody*, but *Rocketman* provided new challenges—and a reunion with star Taron Egerton, whom he dressed for 2018's *Robin Hood*. "With *Bohemian Rhapsody* it was much more of the idea of copying some of the items and a true representation," says Day. "With *Rocketman* we had the freedom to redesign."

Egerton was ready to slip into John's skin via his memorable stagewear, which the actor refers to as a "suit of armor, making yourself feel capable." He adds: "My sense is that it comes from a place of 'if you make yourself ridiculous, then nobody else can.' I mean, I don't wish to deconstruct Elton; that's how I approached it in terms of character, and Julian understood that completely."

Some outfit fits hew closely to John's originals, including a few looks John donned for his starmaking U.S. debut at the Troubadour in Los Angeles in 1970. But Day took liberties with a few of the more eye-popping getups, including an insanely elaborate, colorful wings-and-horns number. "That is a very iconic look, and you really can't change the shape of it," says Day, who nonetheless made alterations subtle and less so, like adding thousands of Swarovski crystals in place of the sequins used on the original by designer Bob Mackie. "It was very comfortable," says Egerton, adding with a laugh, "The problem is, because it's covered in Swarovski crystals, we couldn't wash it for the whole three months, and I wore it every third day. So I'm glad I never have to get in it ever again, because it probably stinks." —SARAH RODMAN

MOVIE PREVIEW

MAY



Woolly bully? Jackson A. Dunn as Brandon Breyer in *Brightburn*

BRIGHTBURN

STARRING
Elizabeth Banks, David Denman, Jackson A. Dunn

DIRECTED BY
David Yarovesky

RELEASE DATE
5.24

In this horror twist on the superhero genre, Elizabeth Banks and David Denman play a couple raising an extraterrestrial child (Jackson A. Dunn) who doesn't exactly share Clark Kent's love for the human race. The moral? "Maybe adopting an alien baby you find in the woods isn't the best idea," says director David Yarovesky. The film's release date moved from November 2018 to May 2019 (after controversy erupted last summer around producer James Gunn's old tweets), but Gunn contends *Brightburn* is "a great Memorial Day movie. Who doesn't want to see an alien child on a murderous rampage as we begin our summer?" —CLARK COLLIS

ALI WO RANDAI

ALWAYS BE MY MAYBE

STARRING
Ali Wong, Randall Park

DIRECTED BY
Nahnatchka Khan

RELEASE DATE
5.31

In *Always Be My Maybe*, Ali Wong and Randall Park play childhood friends who reconnect as adults.

And while the actors haven't known each other since their youngest years—rather, they met in college—the bond between them is one of the many elements that make the film feel authentic, sweet, and wildly funny. EW dug in on Wong and



SUMMER STAR Q&A

ONG AND ALL PARK

Park's rom-com favorites and a scene in the film that features an assist from an R&B star.

Did you guys always want to do a rom-com together?

ALI WONG I remember it always being a rom-com, and Randall and I have the same taste in movies. We love *When Harry Met Sally...* and *Boomerang*.

It's nice to see people coming into their 30s in the film. People feel like you're supposed to have it all together at that point.

WONG We enjoy things that are grounded, but then we're still fans of big laughs. I always go back to *Boomerang*, because that movie is so grounded. You remember Halle Berry is the under-dog? That's the ungrounded part.

RANDALL PARK [Boomerang] is a classic, and the ways it depicts black people

working together and friends with each other. That's not the point of the movie, but it is a part of their reality. We wanted to show these Asian-Americans living their lives without much emphasis on the Asian-American.

How much of the script was your own childhood experiences?

WONG The movie is titled *Always Be My Maybe* because everybody has somebody from their past that they wonder about.

Prior to this film, had either of you made out to D'Angelo in a car before?

PARK Ali and I have known each other for so long, things like that D'Angelo song are such huge parts of our life.

WONG That was a fantasy. I want to make out to D'Angelo! [Laughs]

—KERENSA CADENAS

Childhood friends Marcus (Randall Park) and Sasha (Ali Wong) run into each other and catch up after 15 years



Dennis Quaid and friend, living the life you wish you had, in *A Dog's Journey*

ALSO PLAYING

A DOG'S JOURNEY

MAY 17

The sequel to *A Dog's Purpose* (not to be mistaken for *A Dog's Way Home* or *Dog Days*), *Journey* is another feel-good movie about a reincarnated pup.

THE SOUVENIR

MAY 17

You can't keep Tilda Swinton away from a prosthetic transformation. Just try. You can't. This time, though, she turns into an older woman opposite real-life daughter Honor Swinton Byrne.



TRIAL BY FIRE

MAY 17

If you ever find yourself unjustly sentenced to death for allegedly killing your children in a fire, you're gonna want Laura Dern fighting on your behalf.

THE TOMORROW MAN

MAY 22

Even sixtysomething survivalist preppers can find love. Look at Ed (John Lithgow). What good is an apocalyptic bunker if you have no one to share all those stacks of Spam with?



THE PERFECTION

MAY 24

Get Out star Allison Williams' latest foray into horror (*Black Swan* meets gonzo competitive cellists) has more surprises than a RuPaul's Drag Race lip-synch challenge. In fact, this too has a wig reveal that'll leave you gagging.

THE FALL OF THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

MAY 31

A French-Canadian man of philosophy lands in a moral quandary: If you're forced to deliver packages to make a living and you happen upon a bag of cash from a heist gone wrong, do you take the money? That would be a "Hell, yes!"



JUNE

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW



Talk to the hand! Jean Grey (Sophie Turner) decimates a baddie.

DARK PHOENIX



STARRING
Sophie Turner,
James McAvoy,
Michael Fassbender,
Jennifer Lawrence

DIRECTED BY
Simon Kinberg

RELEASE DATE
6.7

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Charles (James McAvoy), Ariki (Andrew Stehlík), Nightcrawler (Kodi Smit-McPhee), Cyclops (Tye Sheridan), Beast (Nicholas Hoult), Selene (Kota Eberhardt), and Magneto (Michael Fassbender) prepare for battle.

THE END IS NEAR. IT'S A WARM MARCH DAY on the Twentieth Century Fox lot in Los Angeles, with only hours remaining until the studio's merger with Disney becomes official. The feeling of uncertainty is palpable—like the last day of high school. Meanwhile, in a tucked-away office with a project going by the code name *Teen Spirit*, writer-director Simon Kinberg and his producer Hutch Parker are putting final touches on this summer's highly anticipated X-Men film (and Kinberg's feature directorial debut), *Dark Phoenix*. The changing of the guard isn't on Kinberg's mind at the moment, as he's got a potential blockbuster to deliver. Says the director, "When you're making a movie, you're so inside the process that you're not thinking about the executives who are going to be around for the premiere."

Based on arguably the most iconic of all the story lines in the X-canonical, Kinberg's *Phoenix* also acts as a possible climax for this iteration of the mutant saga on film. It's set in 1992, with Mystique (Jennifer Lawrence), Beast (Nicholas Hoult), Storm (Alexandra Shipp), and others being sent to space by Charles (James McAvoy) for an astronaut rescue mission. While she's up there, telepath Jean Grey (Sophie Turner) absorbs a powerful, malevolent energy

force (known in the comics as the Phoenix Force) that threatens to take over her mind and body. After a devastating encounter with Jean leads to the death of a pivotal team member, the mutants—including Magneto (Michael Fassbender)—become divided over whether to save or destroy the tormented redhead. (Jessica Chastain also appears as a shape-shifting alien seeking to control Jean for her own nefarious reasons.) Explains Kinberg: "The story just felt like it was the culmination of all [these X-Men films] and it felt appropriate that we would kill off one of the main characters."

Jean's internal struggle meant the most challenging role so far for the 23-year-old *Game of Thrones* star. Turner studied schizophrenia and dissociative identity disorder to try to ground her performance. "I found this amazing video on YouTube, and it was what it feels like to have auditory hallucinations," says the actress. "I put it in my ears and I walked around [New York City] and I tried to function doing mundane tasks like shopping and talking to people on the street, and it was f---ing difficult!" Adds Parker: "The movie is about Jean evolving from this character into something else, and that's what Sophie did. She went from being honestly a kid on [2016's] *X-Men: Apocalypse* to being

unbelievably committed to the work and showing up with a level of preparation that definitely said, 'Oh s---!'"

Much like Jean, *Dark Phoenix* has gone through its own dramatic evolution. While the film originally wrapped production in October 2017, the filmmakers decided to revamp the look of Phoenix in post (more "cosmic" and less "flamy," according to the director) and shoot a new third act (instead of taking place in space, the climax finds all the X-Men kidnapped and on board a military train). Kinberg admits that his ambitious vision for *Phoenix*—a mix of poignant family drama and superhero spectacular—made for a complicated first stab at directing. "I think the biggest challenge is modulating the film so that we have the big scale and visual-effects action that these movies require, but balancing that in a way that feels calibrated with the drama," he says. "You have these big space sequences and trains flying through the air and people firing lightning bolts, but you also have a lot of emotional, four-page dramatic dialogue scenes."

With Disney and Marvel taking the reins of X-Men, it's unclear what it means for the future of the franchise. But the series' destination isn't Kinberg's current priority (*Dark Phoenix* doesn't have a tag at the end, the typical spot to tease a new installment). "I'm thinking about delivering and finishing this movie the best we possibly can," says the director before heading out to another meeting, "and then taking a vacation." We'd just avoid outer space. —TIM STACK

“

If Sophie had to do 10 hours of work, she'd do 20 hours of prep. She definitely put herself in the hands of Simon and relied on him, as well as helped him to create this dynamic.”

—JAMES MCAVOY ON DARK PHOENIX COSTAR SOPHIE TURNER



He Is the Walrus: Himesh Patel takes on the music of the Beatles

YESTERDAY

STARRING

Himesh Patel,
Lily James,
Kate McKinnon,
Ed Sheeran

DIRECTED BY

Danny Boyle

RELEASE DATE

6.28

IT'S A TYPICAL BRITISH MUSIC FESTIVAL, minus the mud-giddy fans in face paint and wellies swarming stages where upstart bands shout and sway; the smell of funnel cakes, weed, and grilled onions in the air. Except somewhere between the porta potties and a burger stand called Up in My Grill, a discreet set of movie cameras is aimed at newcomer Himesh Patel. As a flailing musician named Jack Malik, he's

about to film a pivotal scene for *Yesterday*—a musical dramedy penned by rom-com godhead Richard Curtis, helmed by Oscar-winning director Boyle, and featuring the original songbook of another little upstart group called the Beatles.

In the script, Patel's Jack wakes up from a freak accident following a global blackout to find that no one—including his loyal best friend and manager (played by Lily

James)—has ever heard of John, Paul, George, and Ringo. And so, Jack passes off a few of their classics as his own, then a few more; suddenly, a (borrowed) star is born. "It's a complete celebration of the Beatles," says Patel, 28. "I've been playing these songs over and over for three, four months now, and I'm not sick of any of them." James (*Cinderella*, *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again*) feels the same about working with Boyle and Curtis: "With Danny, everything is so energized and bold and alive. And then what Richard does so well is humor...and the way he makes the whole audience's heart beat in unison." For Curtis, it was a chance to work in pastoral Suffolk, his own backyard. It's also how he roped in his friend and fellow local Ed Sheeran to play a pivotal supporting role: "Danny actually came to dinner here one night with Ed and just said, 'Why don't we have him in the movie?'" As a wise band once sang, all you need is love—and maybe good neighbors.

—LEAH GREENBLATT

JUNE

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW



AMERICAN WOMAN

STARRING

Sienna Miller,
Christina
Hendricks, Aaron
Paul, Will Sasso

DIRECTED BY

Jake Scott

RELEASE DATE

6.14

"I think I'm really drawn to courage, and she felt courageous," Sienna Miller says of Deb, a "complicated," "truthful," and "messy" person at the center of *American Woman*. In a career high for Miller, 37, the actress plays a grown-up party girl in small-town Pennsylvania whose daughter goes missing. "When you become a parent, you have these awful imaginings [of] your worst nightmare," says Miller, who has a daughter herself. Deb then has to take care of her grandson as she goes on her search. "Something about confronting that and looking at it and exploring it was, however macabre that sounds, intriguing and also incredibly hard." —NICK ROMANO

Jimmie (Jimmie Fails) and Mont (Jonathan Majors), friends since childhood



THE LAST BLACK MAN IN SAN FRANCISCO

STARRING

Jimmie Fails,
Jonathan Majors,
Danny Glover,
Tichina Arnold

DIRECTED BY

Joe Talbot

RELEASE DATE

6.7

The Last Black Man in San Francisco is about as personal as movies get, developing out of conversations that director Joe Talbot and star Jimmie Fails—both making their feature debuts—had when they were teens. Based on the latter's life, the movie is about a young man's efforts to reclaim the Victorian home he grew up in amid rapid gentrification, and is a dreamy paean to a city losing its soul. "My friends' parents—native San Franciscans who [now] live in the outskirts—[cried] when they saw the trailer," Fails says. "This is about respect for the ones before you: the culture, the city, and the people who make the city." —DAVID CANFIELD

AMERICAN WOMAN: SLACK PANO/ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS; THE LAST BLACK MAN IN SAN FRANCISCO: CURTIS RAMM/NETFLIX; TOY STORY 4: DISNEY



TOY ST(

STARRING

Tom Hanks,
Tim Allen,
Annie Potts

DIRECTED BY

Josh Cooley

RELEASE DATE

6.21

A FAMOUS TOY BAND FROM THE '90S REUNITES

in Disney/Pixar's summer sequel, which flings Woody (Tom Hanks) and Buzz (Tim Allen) upstate to a sleepy town where they miraculously find a familiar face from home: Bo Peep,



Bo Peep (Annie Potts) leads *Toy Story 4*'s new rescue crew through the terrifying, well-decorated underbelly of a mom-and-pop antique shop

ORY 4

who reemerges to her old pals as a toy lost—and a woman changed.

"Bo's been lost a long time, and she's had a lot of time to work it out, but she's come to a happy place on the road," says Bo actor Annie Potts, who voiced the character in the 1995 original and 1999's *Toy Story 2*. The actress says she "felt a little bit like Bo" when the character wasn't to be found in

2010's *Toy Story 3* but returns now with a new outfit and a new outlook. "Bo was a little hampered by the fact that she was porcelain and stuck to a lamp, so they freed her up from that and she's reinvented herself. All she has is what she had on her back, and she's made that her cape. She's kind of Mad Max...Mad Maxine."

Director Josh Cooley found inspiration in

another iconic film. "Because they've known each other such a long time, the relationship that Indiana Jones had with Marion is something I had in mind with Woody and Bo," says Cooley, who's eager to showcase the pair's clashing approaches to adventuring—like in the scene (pictured above) where Woody, Bo, Buzz, and rescued carnival prizes Ducky and Bunny (Keegan-Michael Key and Jordan Peele) infiltrate an old antique shop that's home to an evil doll who has taken a few precious prisoners. "Woody flies by the seat of his pants sometimes—actually, most of the time—and immediately jumps off emotion into action," says the director. "Bo has that same energy, but at the same time she's always four steps ahead of everybody else." That may only be a few centimeters, but still. —MARC SNETIKER



SUMMER STAR Q&A

MINDY KALING

■ In *Late Night*, Mindy Kaling's Molly finds herself faced with her very own Miranda Priestly in the form of Emma Thompson's acerbic late-night talk-show host Katherine Newbury. When Katherine gives Molly the job of a lifetime in an attempt to diversify her white, male writers' room, both women realize they have more in common than they initially thought. Kaling tells EW about drawing from her own experiences in television to write this.

This is your first time writing a feature-length movie. How was that different from writing for TV? The characters that I usually play in *The Mindy Project* or in *The Office* are these big, broad comedy characters who are delusional and very funny and flawed. Molly's flawed too, but she's much more of a grounded, vulnerable character who is a little bit more relatable than I'm used to playing.

The movie explores the notion of a diversity hire in the workplace. Is that

BY NG

something you had specific experience with?

I came up on *The Office* writing staff as a part of the NBC diversity initiative, and I remember feeling grateful for it but embarrassed for other people to know that. It took me a long time to realize that that was the way that I found the opportunity to be on the show—and other people who don't look like me find access through where they went to college, who their siblings are.... [So] I didn't have to feel guilty about that.

Was it cathartic to look back at your past experi- ences in writers' rooms and reimag- ine them?

I have all my distinct memories of being the only woman and

"Both characters identify as feminists and yet they're [from] completely different waves of feminism," Mindy Kaling says of Molly and Emma Thompson's Katherine

LATE NIGHT

STARRING

Mindy Kaling,
Emma Thompson

DIRECTED BY

Nisha Ganatra

RELEASE DATE

6.7

the only person of color on a TV sitcom writing staff. And then I have all the feelings of being an employer 12 years later on my own show [*The Mindy Project*], the impatience, all the frustrations. I really do identify with both the Katherine and Molly characters, and that was like, "Oh, this is going to be so fun to write." —PIYA SINHA-ROY

OPPOSITE: MINDY KALING (TOP) AND EMMA THOMPSON (MIDDLE) AT THE 2018 TCA SUMMER PRESS TOUR; ANNABELLE COMES HOME: JUSTIN LUBIN/WARNER BROS.; MEN IN BLACK: INTERNATIONAL: GUYER/20TH CENTURY FOX



JUNE

Steve Coulter as Father Gordon and Vera Farmiga as Lorraine Warren



ANNABELLE COMES HOME

STARRING

Patrick Wilson,
Vera Farmiga,
McKenna Grace

DIRECTED BY

Gary Dauberman

RELEASE DATE

6.28

In this latest film in the evil-doll series, Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga reprise their roles from the *Conjuring* movies as supernatural investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren, while McKenna Grace plays their daughter, Judy. For safety, the Warrens place Annabelle in their room of haunted artifacts, but she is unleashed thanks to Katie Sarie's Daniela—a friend of Judy's babysitter (Madison Iseman)—who recently lost her father. "Daniela will do whatever she can to find out whether or not there is an afterlife," says director Gary Dauberman. "Annabelle's presence causes all these other things to come to life." Sounds like home is where the horror is. —CLARK COLLIS



MEN IN BLACK: INTERNATIONAL

STARRING

Tessa Thompson,
Chris Hemsworth,
Rebecca
Ferguson

DIRECTED BY

F. Gary Gray

RELEASE DATE

6.14

If you're going to put the word *International* in the title, you'd better mean it. In addition to refreshing the *MIB* franchise with two new lead agents, Chris Hemsworth and Tessa Thompson, the fourth installment of the irreverent sci-fi series also gets its real-life frequent-flier miles in. Shooting "from the island of Ischia to the dunes of the Sahara desert," admits director F. Gary Gray (*Straight Outta Compton*), was "a phenomenal experience." But the original *MIB* DNA remains. Promises Thompson: "It just really captures the imagination of an alien world in which we can coexist with other life forms in a way that's so brilliant." —LEAH GREENBLATT

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW
JUNE



No, you're the puppet! Chucky watches over Andy (Gabriel Bateman)

ANATOMY OF A SCENE

Child's Play

STARRING

Aubrey Plaza,
Gabriel Bateman,
Brian Tyree Henry

DIRECTED BY

Lars Klevberg

RELEASE DATE

6.21

AFTER SEVEN CHILD'S PLAY FILMS, HORROR fans have grown accustomed to killer-doll Chucky murdering pretty much everyone who crosses his path. But in director Lars Klevberg's remake of the original 1988 movie, the toy starts off wanting something simple: to be best friends with his new owner, Andy (Gabriel Bateman), watching over him lovingly as he sleeps in an early scene (pictured above). "At this point in the movie, at least, Chucky has no ulterior motives," says producer Seth

Grahame-Smith. "He's just full of love for his best buddy and dreaming of ways to make him happy. It just happens that this particular toy is not all that it seems."

Child's Play costars Brian Tyree Henry as a detective named Mike and Aubrey Plaza as Andy's mom, Karen. Plaza says she was attracted to the project for personal reasons. "My mom, when I was a child, gave me a doll that tried to kill me," deadpans the actress. "No, I had a really young mom, and in fact I think the age difference is

actually what my age difference is with Gabriel, so there was something about that that I really connected to."

Revered character actor and Oscar nominee Brad Dourif (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*) voiced Chucky in the original films (and is set to do so again on a forthcoming Chucky TV show). To fill his ironically large shoes for this film, Grahame-Smith approached *Star Wars* legend and pedigree voice actor Mark Hamill. "He was our first choice," says the producer. "The fact that we have an icon reimagining an iconic character is just an incredible gift for us."

Bateman, 14, had a small role in the first *Annabelle* film (2014), while his sister Talitha starred in the 2017 sequel, *Annabelle: Creation*. So, who is the scarier doll: Annabelle or Chucky? "Chucky," says Bateman. "Talitha will probably get mad at me for saying that, but definitely Chucky."

—CLARK COLLIS

SHAFT

STARRING	DIRECTED BY	RELEASE DATE
Samuel L. Jackson, Richard Roundtree, Jessie T. Usher	Tim Story	6.14

The only thing cooler than one Shaft is three. Richard Roundtree and Samuel L. Jackson return as the legendary private detectives, this time forced to team up on a case with Jackson's millennial, computer-savvy son (played by Jessie T. Usher). The three Shafts face a bit of a generational culture clash—Roundtree originated the role in 1971, while Jackson took over in the 2000 reboot—and frequently disagree on how best to solve a mystery. Despite their differences, all Shafts still share that effortless sense of cool. "He's just a specific definition of manhood," director Tim Story says of the character. "There's something about what he stood for and what he still stands for, and there's not many characters today that symbolize such swag."

—DEVAN COGGAN

Can you dig it? Jessie T. Usher, Samuel L. Jackson, and Richard Roundtree play three generations of Shaft.



They're all good dogs in *The Secret Life of Pets 2*: (clockwise from top left) Duke (Eric Stonestreet), Rooster (Harrison Ford), and Max (Patton Oswalt)

ALSO PLAYING

FRAMING JOHN DELOREAN

JUNE 7

You know the name: DeLorean. Now meet the late automaker in Don Argott and Sheena M. Joyce's film on the wild ride and fall of this engineer, inventor...and con man.



FUNAN

JUNE 7

Innovative animation distributor GKIDS presents this drama (one of two films on this list centered on the year 1975) set in Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime.

PAVAROTTI

JUNE 7

So you think you know Luciano Pavarotti? Okay, chances are your answer is "not well," but

THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS 2

JUNE 7

What do Patton Oswalt, Kevin Hart, Jenny Slate, Ellie Kemper, Dana Carvey, and Hannibal Buress have in common? They (and other comedians) voice the animals in this sequel, which digs deeper into what your fur babies are up to while you're out.



ROLLING THUNDER REVUE: A BOB DYLAN STORY BY MARTIN SCORSESE

JUNE 12

The famed filmmaker zooms into the life of the iconic musician during the fall of 1975

with performances, personal insights, and cameos by Joan Baez and others in Dylan's orbit.

THE DEAD DON'T DIE

JUNE 14

Director Jim Jarmusch collected many of his previous A-list collaborators—like Bill Murray, Tilda Swinton, and Tom Waits—for this zombie comedy.

MURDER MYSTERY

JUNE 14

Jennifer Aniston and Adam Sandler play a husband and wife who become prime suspects of a murder that takes place during a family gathering on a fancy yacht. Summer vacations: booking fast!

VAULT

JUNE 14

Theo Rossi, Clive Standen, and Samira Wiley are on hand for a thriller about an attempted heist that's anything but safe. (Get it??)

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW

JULY



Tom Holland takes flight once again as Spider-Man

SPIDER-MAN

FAR FROM HOME



STARRING
Tom Holland,
Jake Gyllenhaal,
Zendaya

DIRECTED BY
Jon Watts

RELEASE DATE
7.2

IN THIS MONTH

- **The Art of Self-Defense** p.52
- **Dora and the Lost City of Gold** p.52
- **The Farewell** p.54
- **Midsommar** p.54
- **Stuber** p.56
- **Once Upon a Time in Hollywood** p.56



Holland's Peter Parker gets a heroic helping hand from his new ally, Mysterio (Jake Gyllenhaal)

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR FRIENDLY neighborhood Spider-Man ventures out of the neighborhood? *Spider-Man: Far From Home* follows teenager Peter Parker (Tom Holland) across the pond as he hangs up his Spidey suit for a class trip to Europe. If the Peter of 2017's *Homecoming* longed for more grown-up, world-saving responsibility, this Peter is a bit more willing to hang on to his youth and spend a few weeks not stopping supervillains. "Peter's ready for a vacation at the beginning of this movie, to say the least," returning director Jon Watts says of the hard-working hero. "This film is about the world telling him, 'It's time for you to step up and grow up, kid,' and he's saying, 'But I still want to be a kid and go on vacation.'"

Unfortunately for Peter, the forces of evil have other plans. His attempts to prolong his childhood feel relatable to Holland and Watts, and relatability runs deep in Spider-Man's veins (not unlike a certain radioactive spider venom). After all, most of us have more in common with an awkward kid from Queens than a golden Asgardian god or a deiced World War II supersoldier. When *Homecoming* hit theaters two summers ago, Holland waded through comments on social media to see

what fans most connected with and what he should explore in the sequel. The overwhelming answer was Peter's approachability. "Everyone really enjoyed the fact that throughout [*Homecoming*], there's always something you can relate to with him," Holland explains. "So in this film, especially, we tried to tailor the script in a way so that we could hit so many different relatable scenarios, so that not a single person in the world felt left out watching this movie."

Still, not all of Peter's problems are universal. Despite his desire to lie low and explore London, Prague, and Venice with his friends, Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) recruits him to help battle a mysterious quartet called the Elementals, who can manipulate nature. Since Peter doesn't want to expose his secret identity by gallivanting around Europe in Spidey's tights, Fury lends him an all-black stealth suit. ("It kind of looks like Black Widow—maybe it was one of her suits and they just tailored it," Watts quips.)

Fury also connects Peter with a new ally: Quentin Beck, a.k.a. Mysterio, a powerful magician played by Jake Gyllenhaal. "If Tony Stark was sort of the mentor in the previous films, we thought it would be interesting to play Mysterio as almost like

the cool uncle," Watts explains. Spider-Man and Mysterio spark a close friendship—as did Holland, 22, and Gyllenhaal, 38. "If you look at any interview I've ever done prior to this movie and someone asked me, 'Who would you work with if you could work with any actor?' I would've said Jake Gyllenhaal," Holland says. "And when I found out it was him, I was stoked, but also really nervous. But Jake absolutely was more than I ever could have expected." The only issue was "sometimes they would crack each other up, and we could not get through takes occasionally," Watts says with a laugh. "It was a problem!"

A secret mission, a sleek black suit, an exotic European setting... In some ways, *Far From Home* sounds more like a spy movie than a teen adventure. And on set, the cast and crew embraced that secret-agent vibe. "We were doing a bunch of shots that looked like they were out of *The Bourne Identity* or some exciting European action-travel movie," Watts explains. Eventually he got one of those small button-activated recorders that can capture and play back a sound, and whenever they nailed a take, Watts would blast the opening notes of Moby's "Extreme Ways"—that's right, the theme song to all five *Bourne* films. "The button was a big thing for everyone," Holland confirms. "It became a stupid running joke that got out of control," Watts adds, laughing. Hey, "Spider-Bourne" has a nice ring to it. —DEVAN COGGAN

“ We did as much as we could practically and on location. Blowing stuff up, racing cars through the extremely narrow Prague streets, running across Venice rooftops... It was a lot of fun. ” —DIRECTOR JON WATTS



MY
CHARACTER
DIES
THIS
SEASON

HELPS PREVENT LEAKS

GLAD

JULY

THE ART OF SELF-DEFENSE

STARRING
Jesse Eisenberg,
Alessandro Nivola,
Imogen Poots

DIRECTED BY
Riley Stearns

RELEASE DATE
7.12

The Art of Self-Defense is hard to describe—even for Jesse Eisenberg, who uses words such as “strange,” “heightened,” and “unbelievably hysterical.” The Oscar-nominated actor stars as Casey, a timid loner who, after a violent attack, comes under the tutelage of a charismatic karate instructor (Alessandro Nivola). Initially concerned he was being offered another “typical nervous male protagonist role,” the *Social Network* star read the script out of sheer curiosity. “And thank God I did,” he declares. “It becomes this very unusual, surreal, but wry commentary on the absurdities of masculinity.” —DEREK LAWRENCE

“This is some of the funniest dialogue you will ever see,” says Jesse Eisenberg (right, with Imogen Poots).



Dora (Isabela Moner) teaches her city friends how to explore jungle ruins

Dora AND THE LOST CITY OF GOLD

STARRING
Isabela Moner,
Michael Peña,
Eva Longoria,
Benicio Del Toro

DIRECTED BY
James Bobin

RELEASE DATE
7.31

ACTRESS ISABELA MONER IS 17 YEARS OLD—ONLY ONE YEAR younger than the original *Dora the Explorer* animated series. Now, after years of being nicknamed Dora for having rocked a similar haircut, Moner is starring in the live-action *Dora and the Lost City of Gold*. The new film finds a teenage Dora moving to high school with other kids in the city—quite a difference from the South American jungles she spent her childhood exploring.

“Dora has this Kimmy Schmidt-type disposition where she’s excited about everything and the world is new to her,” Moner says. “[Her] age is perfect, because the people my age grew up with her and can relate to the struggles of not fitting in at high school. Dora doesn’t know how to do anything but be herself.”

Director James Bobin (*The Muppets*) says he was attracted to the “inherent comic idea” of such a character colliding with “the anxiety-driven social world of the contemporary teenager,” but also wanted to replicate some of the educational elements of the original show. That means Dora speaks multiple languages (English, Spanish, Quechua) and explores Incan history, while also poking fun at how the TV show would prompt its young audience to shout out answers to questions and puzzles. So, Moner says, live-action Dora will still occasionally turn to the camera and ask for a reply, “but everyone else in the scene is like, ‘What are you doing? Who are you talking to?’” Dora still has a lot to learn about the real world. —CHRISTIAN HOLUB



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HOME MOVIE PREVIEW
JULY



Say Farewell to the all-comedy Awkwafina

The Farewell

STARRING
Awkwafina

DIRECTED BY
Lulu Wang

RELEASE DATE
7.12

YOU MIGHT NOT SUSPECT IT, BUT AWKWAFINA IS A crier. She didn't suspect it herself: Before shooting the dramedy *The Farewell*, the comedienne warned writer-director Lulu Wang that she might not be able to weep on screen. "I was like, 'I tried it once. Can't do it,'" Awkwafina tells EW. "And then I went [to set] and I would cry, like, when we were rehearsing. I couldn't hold it back."

Blame the material. This Sundance breakout follows a young Chinese-American woman who travels to China to see her terminally ill grandmother one last time—all the while helping her family conceal the cancer diagnosis from the ailing matriarch. The film marks Awkwafina's first starring (and dramatic) role on the big screen, but upon seeing her audition tape, "I knew that she would be able to carry the movie," says Wang, who wrote the story based on her personal experiences. "There was no performance. She just was the character. You could just feel the rawness of her emotions."

That might have to do with the actress' own Chinese grandmother, who raised her and inspired her in the role. "It was just really, really, a really different experience for me," Awkwafina says. "Thinking about my grandma and how much she means to me, and putting myself in that place." It's no wonder she kept tearing up. —MARY SOLLOSI



THE FAREWELL: CAST: RYAN GOSLING, MARGOT ROBBIE, CONSTANCE WU, LUCILLE WALLACE. DIRECTOR: LULU WANG. RELEASE DATE: JULY 12

ANATOMY OF A SCENE **MIDSOMMAR**

STARRING
Florence Pugh,
Jack Reynor

DIRECTED BY
Ari Aster

RELEASE DATE
7.3

ACTOR JACK REYNOR LIKENS MIDSOMMAR to both *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Wicker Man*, the 1973 film about a Scottish pagan cult who periodically burned visitors alive. Except? "*The Wicker Man*, that's kind of a cult you wouldn't mind being a part of," he (worryingly) says. "But these guys, in *Midsommar*, they're really f---ing creepy dudes."

In writer-director Ari Aster's second movie after last year's acclaimed terror tale



Drink up: (from middle to right) Florence Pugh, Jack Reynor, William Jackson Harper, and Will Poulter

MMAR

Hereditary, Reynor and Florence Pugh play an American couple, Dani and Christian, whose lovers' bond has seen better days. "Dani has had a loss, [and] by the time that the film starts, she's in the middle of a relationship that is on its way out," says Pugh of her character. "When we meet her, she's just about to suffer some more. So it's pretty much rock bottom with her!"

The pair embark on a trip to Scandinavia with friends Mark (Will Poulter), Josh (William Jackson Harper), and Pelle

(Vilhelm Blomgren), the latter of whom has invited them to visit his remote village in Sweden. "They're a really weird, culty kind of commune," Reynor says of its locals. "Everybody's all dressed in white, they have strange kinds of social cliques." The town is celebrating Midsummer—"a particularly special iteration of the festival," says Aster ominously—and invite their guests to take part in a number of ritualistic meals. These include a repast Pugh calls The Last Supper. "They're in the middle of their holiday, and a few of

them are over it, and I'm getting inspired to look around and figure things out," says the actress of the travelers' states of mind.

The sequence was filmed in a field outside Budapest, Hungary, where, prior to the shoot, Aster oversaw the construction of the movie's village set from scratch. "Some of those buildings are three stories tall," says the director. "It was a huge endeavor." The temperature soared on many of the production days, including the one on which Aster filmed the meal. "For about a month of shooting, it was unbearably hot, and the cast and crew were very upset with me," says the filmmaker. While Reynor doesn't use the word "upset," he does recall the day as decidedly unpleasant. "It must have been 40 degrees centigrade, and we were sitting in the direct sunlight," says the actor. "As a result of everything on the table having sugar in it, we were getting murdered by wasps. It was uncomfortable, but I think it lent itself to the tone of the thing." —CLARK COLLIS

MOVIE PREVIEW JULY

STUBER

STARRING	DIRECTED BY	RELEASE DATE
Dave Bautista, Kumail Nanjiani	Michael Dowse	7.12

In this action-comedy, it's bad enough that a ruthless cop, Vic Manning (Dave Bautista), commandeers an Uber driven by the uptight Stu (Kumail Nanjiani). But Vic's rider rating is really in jeopardy when he drags in a pit bull named Pico he's rescued from a group of drug dealers. "[Stu] doesn't really realize what he's gotten himself into by picking up this passenger," Bautista says. "So yeah, as you can imagine, they would butt heads a little bit." On their quest to hunt down a killer through the streets of L.A., they might just murder each other.

—ANTHONY BREZNICAN

Kumail Nanjiani plays an Uber driver whose car is hijacked by a rogue cop (Dave Bautista), who brings this dog, too



ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLY

STARRING	DIRECTED BY	RELEASE DATE
Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt, Margot Robbie	Quentin Tarantino	7.26

THE FIRST THING YOU NEED TO KNOW about Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood* is that it is *not* a Manson-murders movie, according to producer David Heyman: "That's one of the big misconceptions to clarify." Set in 1969, *Once Upon a Time* brings together Leonardo DiCaprio as fading Western TV star Rick Dalton and Brad Pitt as his stunt double Cliff Booth, two

friends navigating an industry and era in flux, painstakingly re-created on location in Los Angeles by Tarantino. But Charles Manson and his deadly cult do play an important role in the film. "It's about the loss of innocence that came about in 1969 with the Manson family," explains producer Shannon McIntosh, who's worked with Tarantino for more than two decades. There's the starry



Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio star in their first feature together in *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood*. "Brad and Leo, their chemistry is magnetic," says producer Shannon McIntosh.

WOOD

Margot Robbie as It Girl and eventual Manson-family victim Sharon Tate, who lives next door to Rick. "It's the three classes of Hollywood," says Heyman. "There's the high Hollywood of Sharon, the declining star of Rick, and there's Cliff, who lives farther out and with more humble means." It's taken Tarantino until this, his ninth film, to explore the Los Angeles of his childhood and the industry that so inspired him that he's known to be a walking film encyclopedia. "This is Quentin's most personal film," Heyman explains. "This is his memories of growing up in Los Angeles and being a fan of Hollywood." —PIYA SINHA-ROY

DAVID CROSBY: REMEMBER MY NAME: SONY PICTURES CLASSICS; CHERYL HALEY (KAYA SCODELARIO) IN CRAWL: DAVID RAKELMAN/STILLS

ALSO PLAYING

CRAWL

JULY 12

After a hurricane, Haley (Kaya Scodelario) finds her father (Barry Pepper)—and plenty to fear—in the crawl space of their Florida family home in this horror thriller.



DAVID CROSBY: REMEMBER MY NAME

JULY 19

The rock legend gets up close and personal, tracing his career through his Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young days to now, all the while grappling with his own mortality and reminiscing on his wild youth.

Rising floodwaters become the least of Haley's (Kaya Scodelario) worries in *Crawl*.

THE LION KING

JULY 19

Disney's 1994 Oscar winner is the latest to complete the circle of life from animated hit to live-action flick. With help from his father, Mufasa (James Earl Jones), and other furry friends, Simba (Donald Glover) learns how to take his rightful place as king.



BRAHMS: THE BOY II

JULY 26

In this sequel to 2016's *The Boy*, Katie Holmes stars as a mother whose son develops an unsettling friendship with creepy, lifelike doll Brahms.

THE GREAT HACK

JULY 24

This doc delves into the Cambridge Analytica/Facebook data breach, exploring the dark world of data exploitation. Karim Amer and Jehane Noujaim (*The Square*) direct.

MIKE WALLACE IS HERE

JULY 26

The tables are turned on legendary *60 Minutes* newsmen Mike Wallace in this documentary, which uses only archival footage to paint a portrait of Wallace's professional triumphs and troubled personal life.



AUG

SUMMER



Ready to kick some ax:
Dwayne Johnson and
Jason Statham

MOVIE PREVIEW

FAST & FURIOUS PRESENTS HOBBS & SHAW



STARRING
Dwayne Johnson,
Jason Statham,
Idris Elba

DIRECTED BY
David Leitch

RELEASE DATE
8.2

IN THIS
MONTH

- **Where'd You Go, Bernadette**
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- **Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark** p.62
- **Angel Has Fallen** p.63
- **The Angry Birds Movie 2** p.65
- **The Kitchen** p.65
- **Good Boys** p.64



Idris Elba costars as Brixton, a practically bulletproof soldier whom Johnson calls the "baddest bad guy the *Fast & Furious* franchise has ever seen."

THE FAST & FURIOUS FRANCHISE HAS TWO new stars behind the wheel. After eight films, the series is turning the ignition on its first spin-off, uniting fan-favorite characters Luke Hobbs (Dwayne Johnson) and Deckard Shaw (Jason Statham).

Their first meeting back in 2015's *Furious 7* resulted in a fistfight and a hospitalization, but since then Hobbs and Shaw have formed a reluctant alliance whenever the world needs saving. In this new film, the globe is unsurprisingly once again in peril, forcing the super-skilled odd couple to work closer than ever. They're both virtually indestructible heroes who know their way around a bad-guy brawl or a car chase, and they both sport identical hair (or lack thereof). The similarities, however, end there: Hobbs is a straitlaced lawman of Samoan descent who'll stop at nothing to see his foes brought to justice. Shaw is a slippery Brit with a not-so-sparkling past, and he's more than willing to bend the rules if it serves his own interests. "I think people like to see oil and water have to merge," Statham tells

EW with a laugh. "These characters are bigger and larger than life, so to try to cork up their egos to work together is not an easy task."

So, what baddie could possibly be bad enough to unite these strange bedfellows? Idris Elba plays Brixton, a super-soldier who's nicked a lethal bioweapon. Cyber enhancements and genetic engineering have turned him near invincible—and he's looking to cause some mayhem. "The overall goal was 'Let's create the greatest and baddest bad guy the *Fast & Furious* franchise has ever seen,'" Johnson explains. "That's a very high bar, considering who we've had in the past. So when Charlize [Theron, who starred in 2017's *The Fate of the Furious*] reads this, I'm going to get a text from her like, 'Dude, what the f---! No one's better than me!' And I'm going to say, 'I love you, but...'"

Along the way, Brixton crosses paths with Hattie (*The Crown's* Vanessa Kirby), Shaw's sister and a highly skilled MI6 agent who teams up with Hobbs and Shaw to try to bring Brixton down. (Also making an

appearance is Hattie and Deckard's mother, played by a returning Helen Mirren.) Their pursuit of Brixton takes them from the Shaws' home turf of London to the Hobbs family chop shop in Samoa, with plenty of explosions and bare-knuckle scraps along the way.

Also joining the franchise is David Leitch, the longtime stunt expert and director who helmed *John Wick* (with director Chad Stahelski), *Atomic Blonde*, and *Deadpool 2*. For Leitch, his challenge was to take the 18-year-old series in a new direction, emphasizing hand-to-hand combat and as many practical stunts as possible, while still remaining true to the series' history. "There's a common thread in all [*Fast* movies] where they have great action, they have great characters, and there's a sense of family," Leitch says. "So if we keep those themes alive in our version of a *Fast* movie, then I think we're gonna be okay."

"The early vision was, yes, we're gonna be badass, yes, we're gonna be all the things that a *Fast & Furious* movie is, with huge action set pieces and great fun dialogue," Johnson adds. "But we also wanted to make sure that we had a s---load of comedy." The paint job may look a bit different, but what's under the hood is still as reliable as ever. —DEVAN COGGAN

“These characters are bigger and larger than life, so to try to cork up their egos to work together is not an easy task.” —JASON STATHAM



[Richard Linklater] sits and chats and reads with the actress and the writer. Cate Blanchett says of the film's making, 'It was a hilarious and touching process. I adore him.'

WHERE'D YOU GO, BERNADETTE

STARRING

Cate Blanchett,
Emma Nelson,
Billy Crudup,
Kristen Wiig

DIRECTED BY

Richard
Linklater

RELEASE DATE

8.16

FIGURING OUT BERNADETTE FOX WASN'T EASY for Cate Blanchett. "It wasn't just how complex and painfully absurd her life is, but the brittle way she pits herself against the world," the actress, 49, says. "In the end,

the trickiest thing was tone. It's one thing to listen to an unrelenting sardonic inner voice in a novel, and another thing entirely to hear it on screen."

Fans of Maria Semple's *Where'd You Go,*

Bernadette should know what she's talking about. The 2012 novel, which spent more than a year on the *New York Times* best-seller list, presents significant challenges for a big-screen adaptation, particularly Semple's uniquely sarcastic voice and her use of catty emails, phone transcripts, and police reports to drive the narrative. A once-renowned architect, Bernadette retreats into a shell of her former self after she gets married and has children. And then she vanishes to Antarctica(!), leaving her plucky 14-year-old daughter, Bee (Emma Nelson), to solve the mystery of what happened, and why.

"I concentrated on what I felt the book was really about at its emotional core, which was an intense portrait of motherhood," director Richard Linklater (*Boyhood*) says. This meant working closely with Blanchett and newcomer Nelson during an entire month of rehearsals. "We talked through everything," Nelson says. "Is this part of my character? Would I say this? Is this how the conversation would really go?"

Blanchett describes the collaboration as a "fascinating challenge," but always felt intimately connected to her character. "I think so many women relate to Bernadette: She's someone who has been eaten alive by failure and buried her creative identity in child-rearing," she says. "Haven't we all thought at one point, 'Oh, s---, this mess is all too much. [Wouldn't it] just be easiest to disappear?'" —DAVID CANFIELD

AUGUST

SUMMER MOVIE PREVIEW



CREATURE FEATURE

Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark

STARRING
Zoe Colletti,
Michael Garza,
Austin Zajur

DIRECTED BY
André Øvredal

RELEASE DATE
8.9

GUILLERMO DEL TORO STILL REMEMBERS where he was when he first discovered *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*. Spotting it in a San Antonio bookshop in the early '80s, the eventual Oscar-winning director was immediately attracted to the evocative title, but soon found himself pulled in by Alvin Schwartz's short stories and Stephen Gammell's eerie illustrations. "They had the simplicity of campfire stories," he says. "They had that flavor of folklore and oral narrative, with a great sense of setup and punchline."

Decades later, del Toro was approached about adapting the books into a film. As producer and co-writer, he immediately conceived it not as an anthology but rather as a unified story with a frame narrative. So the new film, directed by André Øvredal, is set in 1968 and follows a group of kids as they each encounter a different *Scary Stories* monster based on their greatest fear, such as the Pale Lady from the Schwartz/Gammell story "The Dream."

"She embodies what's so fun about the stories, a cheeky innocence where under-



(From top) The Pale Lady, brought to life on screen; Stephen Gammell's original art for Alvin Schwartz's story "The Dream"

neath there's something so grave and scary," Øvredal says of the Pale Lady. Del Toro admits she was "the most challenging character to translate from page to screen," but also his favorite. "In each instance we would say, 'Does it look and feel like the character on the page?' Once you see them in movement in the film, they come across exactly as close as you can get to a Gammell drawing come alive." —CHRISTIAN HOLUB

ANGEL HAS FALLEN

STARRING
Gerard Butler,
Morgan Freeman,
Jada Pinkett
Smith

DIRECTED BY
Ric Roman
Waugh

RELEASE DATE
8.23

Despite the success of *Olympus Has Fallen* and *London Has Fallen*, Gerard Butler knew he had to "refreshen up" his franchise. "We could have just made *Tokyo Has Fallen* and people would have had a blast, but what else would we have been saying?" shares Butler. He took inspiration from *The Fugitive* and *The Bourne Identity* for a "more grounded, gritty" third installment of the action-thriller series, which finds Secret Service agent Mike Banning framed for an assassination attempt on the president. "I feel like we've been brave in taking this new direction," he says. "If it pays off, then maybe we make a fourth. If it doesn't, then hey, I had a blast."

—DEREK LAWRENCE

"It's the same man in the same position, but it's a deeper, darker journey," says Gerard Butler



ANGEL HAS FALLEN: SIMON VARANDOL/UNIVERSAL STUDIOS; ANGRY BIRDS 2: COLUMBIA PICTURES/UBIQUITY ANIMATIONS; THE KITCHEN: ALISON COHEN/RODA/WARNER BROS.

Meet Garry (Sterling K. Brown), a piggy you may know from the IT department



THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 2

STARRING
Jason Sudeikis,
Josh Gad, Danny
McBride, Peter
Dinklage

DIRECTED BY
Thirop Van
Orman

RELEASE DATE
8.16

Sterling K. Brown is ready to flex his comedic muscles for obvious reasons: "Everybody tells me I make them cry all the time, so I'm trying to balance that out," the *This Is Us* star says of Garry, the coffee-guzzling piggy tech genius he voices in this *Angry Birds* sequel. "If there was a Q from the James Bond world, Garry would occupy that space, with the exception that half of his contraptions are kinda crappy." With a new eagle-eyed villain on the way via *Saturday Night Live*'s Leslie Jones, Brown promises, "Garry's got quite a few tricks up the sleeve." —NICK ROMANO

"I wanted to show a diversity of women's experiences," says director Andrea Berloff



THE KITCHEN

STARRING
Melissa
McCarthy,
Elisabeth Moss,
Tiffany Haddish

DIRECTED BY
Andrea Berloff

RELEASE DATE
8.9

Based on the Vertigo comic-book series, the 1970s-set *Mob movie* stars Melissa McCarthy, Elisabeth Moss, and Tiffany Haddish as housewives-turned-gangsters cooking up trouble in Hell's Kitchen. "Together, they're a force," McCarthy tells EW of the three women who take on the Irish Mafia after their Mob husbands are incarcerated. "They run the criminal enterprise much more viciously than the men ever did," adds director Andrea Berloff. For Moss' character, part of the experience was successfully channeling her anger. "It's a very specific type of person that takes to being a hitwoman and cutting up bodies," she says. You know what they say, if you can't stand the heat... —RUTH KINANE



SUMMER STAR Q&A

JACOB TREMBLAY

When it came time to cast the sixth-grade star of his R-rated comedy *Good Boys*, director Gene Stupnitsky had only one name on his list—mainly because he could think of only one name. “Jacob Tremblay is the only 12-year-old actor who can sell a movie,” Stupnitsky says of his acclaimed *Room* and *Wonder* star. “Tell me more.” Tremblay dryly retorts to the praise, demonstrating the same comedic timing he uses in this, his big-screen pivot from grim dramas to broad comedy.

How did this role first come about for you?

I had never done a comedy before. I was able to learn a bunch of new acting skills, because in drama it's

LAY

more, like, based on reality. I was so excited to do a movie about a group of boys going on an adventure.

There's a lot of swearing. Were you hesitant at all? Were your parents?

I like to separate me from my character. So Max swears. But Jacob Tremblay does not swear. And my parents are really supportive of me. They'll just laugh their heads off when I swear [while reading the script]. They told me, "You should play this, it would be a great idea." But I would never swear like that at my house.

At one point you vomited during filming, I hear?

I wish it was an on-camera moment because it was hilarious. There was a part where I squirted mayonnaise on this guy and I thought, for comedic effect,

GOOD BOYS

STARRING

Jacob Tremblay, Keith L. Williams, Brady Noon, Will Forte

DIRECTED BY

Gene Stupnitsky

RELEASE DATE

8.16

I should eat some of the mayonnaise. I did not expect the mayonnaise to be expired and yucky. After they said "Cut," I threw up—a lot. It was in the middle of a mall food court where people were walking around, so they were in for a big treat.

What kind of movie would you want to do next?

Maybe like a cool fantasy movie? Swords and dragons. That would be fun.

—JAMES HIBBERD

Water features in the food court: Keith L. Williams, Jacob Tremblay, and Brady Noon



MOVIES



In *Blinded by the Light*, Viveik Kalra stars as Springsteen-obsessed Javed, who is trying to learn to live with what he can't rise above...or is it something he can?

ALSO PLAYING



BRIAN BANKS

AUG. 9

Starring *Friday Night Lights'* Alidis Hodge, this drama, about a high school football star falsely accused of rape and sentenced to a decade in prison, gives a cold, hard look at the justice system.

CORPORATE ANIMALS

AUG. 9

A team-building trip ends in disaster and light cannibalism, in this comedy(?) starring Demi Moore, who appears as the nightmare CEO of an edible-cutlery company.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOON

AUG. 9

This Netflix sci-fi thriller, starring Michael C. Hall and Boyd Holbrook, is about a serial killer who times his crimes to the lunar cycle. Maybe it's just a phase...

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT

AUG. 14

Director Gurinder Chadha (*Bend It Like Beckham*) delivers another lovely coming-of-age story with the music of Bruce Springsteen at its center.



AQUARELA

AUG. 16

Documentarian Victor Kossakovsky takes a look at the wonders of the world, this time focusing on bodies of water across the globe, from oceans to icebergs.

Pete Koslow (Joel Kinnaman) finds himself as tries to protect his family from within and outside of prison.

OFFICIAL SECRETS

AUG. 23

Keira Knightley puts her political-thriller bonnet on, playing Katharine Gun, an IRL British whistle-blower who sent top secret info to the press about an illegal U.S.-U.K. spying operation.



PLAYMOBIL: THE MOVIE

AUG. 30

Those adorable Playmobil toys are finally getting their own flick, in which a big sister (Any Taylor-Joy) goes into the animated Playmobil world to help find her younger brother.

MOVIE PREVIEW 2019

JULY



OFFICIAL UPFRONT: LIME IN GOLD (LTD. 2,000 COPIES), ANGRY BIRDS 2 (2,000 COPIES), 47 METERS DOWN: UNGAGED (ADRIAN MINGUS/GRANITEX FILM/NETFLIX), 87 (1,000 COPIES)

Men in Black: International

Tessa Thompson,
Chris Hemsworth

Murder Mystery

Jennifer Aniston,
Adam Sandler

Plus One

Maya Erskine

Shaft

Samuel L. Jackson

Vault

Theo Rossi

Wild Rose

Jessie Buckley

JUNE 19

The Edge of Democracy

Doc on Brazil
politics

JUNE 21

Child's Play

Horror

The Quiet One

Doc on Bill Wyman

Them That Follow

Olivia Colman

Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am

Documentary

Toy Story 4

Tom Hanks, Tim Allen

JUNE 26

The Chambermaid

Foreign drama

Skin

Jamie Bell

JUNE 28

Annabelle Comes Home

Vera Farmiga,
Patrick Wilson

Killers

Anonymous

Gary Oldman

Maiden

Doc on sailing crew

Yesterday

Directed by

Danny Boyle

JULY

JULY 2

Spider-Man: Far From Home

Tom Holland,
Zendaya

JULY 3

Midsommar

Florence Pugh,
Jesse Reyner

JULY 12

The Art of Self-Defense

Jesse Eisenberg

Crawl

Horror

The Farewell

Awkwafina

Stuber

Kumail Nanjiani,
Dave Bautista

JULY 19

David Crosby: Remember My Name

Documentary

The Lion King

Live-action remake

JULY 24

The Great Hack

Documentary

JULY 26

Brahms: The Boy II

Katlie Holmes

Mike Wallace Is Here

Documentary

The Mountain

Jeff Goldblum

Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood

Leonardo DiCaprio,
Brad Pitt

JULY 31

Dora and the Lost City of Gold

Isabel Moner

47 Meters Down: Uncaged

John Corbett

AUG

AUG 2

Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw

Dwayne Johnson,
Jason Statham

AUG 9

Brian Banks

Aldis Hodge

Corporate Animals

Demi Moore

In the Shadow of the Moon

Boyd Holbrook

The Kitchen

Elisabeth Moss

Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark

Horror adaptation

AUG 14

Blinded by the Light

Music-filled dramedy

AUG 16

Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood

July 26

47 Meters Down: Uncaged

John Corbett

The Angry Birds Movie 2

Animated sequel

Aquarrels

Doc on water

Cold Case

Hannibal

Doc on unsolved mystery

Good Boys

Jacob Tremblay

The Informer

Joel Kinnaman

The Tracker

Dolph Lundgren

Where'd You Go, Bernadette

Cate Blanchett

AUG 23

Angel Has Fallen

Gerard Butler

Driven

Jason Sudeikis

Official Secrets

Keira Knightley

Tone-Deaf

Robert Patrick

AUG 30

Angel of Mine

Noomi Rapace

Itsy Bitsy

Horror

Playmobil: The Movie

Daniel Radcliffe



47 Meters Down: Uncaged (Aug. 16)



Movies

Edited By | KERENSA CADENAS @KERENSACADENAS



↑ Game over?: Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) and Captain America (Chris Evans) face the end

Avengers: Endgame

STARRING

Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson, Paul Rudd

DIRECTED BY

Anthony Russo and Joe Russo

RATING

PG-13

LENGTH

3 hrs., 2 mins.

REVIEW BY

Leah Greenblatt @Leahbats

THE AVENGERS ARE DEAD. LONG LIVE THE AVENGERS.

For the millions who watched half the Marvel universe vaporize on screen in the final moments of 2018's *Infinity War*—whole standalone franchises reduced to swirling ash with a sweep of übervillain Thanos' meaty paw—there had to be one last sequel to set it all right. Nearly a year to the day, *Endgame* arrives with the promise of

many things: revenge, redemption, a runtime that defies the limits of most street-side parking meters. And the movie largely delivers, splashing its ambitious three-hour narrative across a sprawling canvas of characters, eras, and not-quite-insurmountable challenges.

As the story opens, though, *Infinity's* surviving superheroes hardly seem up to the task. Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) has cocooned himself in a remote country cabin; Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) is staring into space and eating sad peanut butter sandwiches; Thor (Chris Hemsworth) spends his days drinking, a beer-gutted agoraphobe in a bathrobe. Even Captain Marvel (Brie Larson) has other galaxies to worry about. But there is an Ant-Man with a plan: Paul Rudd's

AVENGERS: ENDGAME © MARVEL STUDIOS 2019 THE WHITE CROW: SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

THE 17-WORD REVIEW



The White Crow (Limited, April 26) The Ralph Fiennes-directed account of Rudolf Nureyev's defection to the West

REEL
NEWS

- **Captain Waterworks** Chris Evans said he cried "like, six times" during the final *Avengers* flick.
- **Cannes Goods** The French film festival will debut movies from Pedro Almodóvar and Terrence Malick.

ageless, shrinkable Scott Lang may have the seeds of a time machine that would allow the crew to go back and gather the Infinity Stones that triggered the original, terrible snap.

That means one more chance to see Chris Evans' Captain America and Jeremy Renner's Hawkeye do the things they do with shields and arrows and thousand-yard stares. But also to witness a Hulk (Mark Ruffalo) who has learned to own his oversize power (he willingly takes group selfies and wears shawl-collared cardigans now!); to follow along as Stark and Thor make some kind of peace with their pasts; to bask in the banter of bounty-hunting space raccoons and dry-witted billionaires. Thanos, voiced by Josh Brolin, is still a formidable antihero, with his ominous proclamations—"I. Am. *Inevitable*," he intones more than once—and a chin furrowed like wide-wale corduroy. And oh, the cameos: Directors Joe and Anthony Russo, veterans of the MCU, max out their Rolodex in nearly every scene, though half of the A-list appearances are over before the audience's happy gasps of surprise even fade.

With nothing less than the fate of the free world (or at least 50 percent of it) at stake, there's an expected urgency to it all, but an underlying melancholy, too—not just for everything that's been lost, but for what won't be coming back. After 11 years, 22 films, and uncountable post-credit Easter eggs, the endgame of an era has finally come. **B+**

THIS FILM CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:

TT TIME TRAVEL

SB SIDEBURNS

HS HULK SMASHES

S SACRIFICE

features better dancing than acting. **B-** —CHRIS NASHAWAY



5 Things You Learn in Beyoncé's *Homecoming*

Netflix just dropped a concert doc about the star's historic 2018 performance as the first black woman to headline Coachella. But there's more to the film than watching her slay. **BY NICK ROMANO**

SHE INTENTIONALLY CHOSE AN ALL-BLACK CAST

In a nod to historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Beyoncé Knowles-Carter filled the stage with black musicians, steppers, and vocalists. "Instead of me pulling out my flower crown, it was more important that I brought our culture to Coachella," she says in the film.

SHE HAD A HARROWING PREGNANCY

Beyoncé planned to headline Coachella in 2017, but she says "my body went through more than what I thought it could" during her pregnancy with twins Sir and Rumi. "I had high blood pressure, I developed

toxemia, preeclampsia, and, in the womb, one of my babies' heartbeats paused a few times, so I had to get an emergency C-section."

SHE WENT VEGAN

For her first live show since the "extremely difficult pregnancy," Beyoncé stuck to a strict "no bread, no carbs, no sugar, no dairy, no meat, no fish, no alcohol" diet. She trained, but also rebuilt her body "from cut muscles. It took me a while to feel confident enough to freak it and give it my own personality."

SHE LEFT NO SEQUIN UNTURNED

Beyoncé "personally selected each dancer, every light, the material

on the steps, the height of the pyramid, the shape of the pyramid." For the costumes, Balmain creative director Olivier Rousteing helped ensure "every patch was hand-sewn" and "every tiny detail had an intention."

SHE WAS INSPIRED BY HER DAD'S COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Beyoncé's father, Mathew, attended an HBCU, and she called the Battle of the Bands, the renowned marching-team competition, "the highlight of my year." For Beychella, "I studied my history," she says. "I studied my past, and I put every mistake, all of my triumphs, my 22-year career into my two-hour *Homecoming* performance."

Non-Fiction

STARRING Guillaume Canet, Juliette Binoche

DIRECTED BY Olivier Assayas

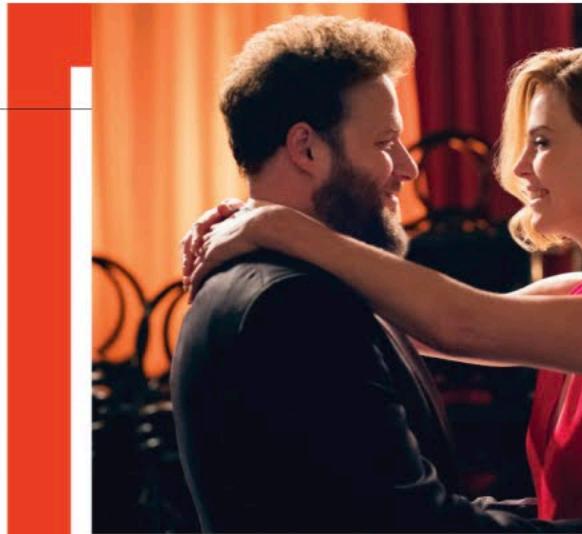
RATING R | LENGTH 1 hr., 46 mins.

REVIEW BY Chris Nashawaty @ChrisNashawaty

DIALING BACK THE MORE enigmatic elements of his last two films (*Clouds of Sils Maria* and *Personal Shopper*), Olivier Assayas' sharp, sly new film is almost old-fashioned in its narrative straightforwardness. It's an unexpected and not entirely unwelcome change of pace from the director. Harkening back to an era of French cinema loaded with literate dialogue and spiced with a soupçon of infidelity, *Non-Fiction* stars Guillaume Canet and Juliette Binoche as Alain and Selena—a middle-aged Parisian couple wrestling with their desires inside and outside of their marriage. Set against the backdrop of the evolve-or-die 21st-century publishing industry in which Alain works as a book editor, the film opens up beyond its world of relaxed bohemian dinner parties full of drinking and debating to examine what keeps this couple together...and what may eventually tear them apart. Vincent Macaigne is charmingly cranky as a disheveled novelist who gets entangled in a Twitter-mob controversy (as well as in Alain and Selena's relationship), and Nora Hamzawi is as vulnerable as an exposed nerve as his put-upon partner. In the end, *Non-Fiction* is a warm, humane story that ends on a hopeful note reminiscent of *Hannah and Her Sisters*. Life can be a messy business, but every so often it reveals moments of perfect clarity. **B+**



Juliette Binoche glows



Finding Love in a Hopeless Place

Politics isn't known for bringing people together. But for *Long Shot*, it was the perfect stage for **Seth Rogen** and **Charlize Theron**'s new love story. **BY NICK ROMANO**

IN THIS ERA OF NEO-NAZIS, FAKE news, and a former reality TV star leading America, Charlize Theron and Seth Rogen managed to make a charming romantic comedy set in the political arena.

Long Shot, in theaters May 3, isn't so brash as to name-drop President Trump. But the film certainly contains some real-life parallels: Theron plays Secretary of State Charlotte Field, who's running to become the first female president while falling for her speechwriter—and former babysitting charge—Fred Flarsky (Rogen). The story also features an uncommonly handsome Canadian Prime Minister (Alexander Skarsgård) and hilarious riffs on *Fox & Friends*.

But Theron's not channeling Hillary Clinton, and she and Rogen want to make clear that *Long Shot* is art inspired by—not imitating—life.

"[The audience] doesn't need to feel that the movie takes place in the same world that they live in, but it's helpful if the people who made the movie live in the same world that they live in," says Rogen, who hired *Girls* writer Dan Sterling to pen 2014's *The Interview* after seeing his first draft of *Long Shot* (then titled *Flarsky*) on the 2011 Black List, a space for Hollywood's favorite unproduced screenplays.

Rogen workshoped the script for several years with Theron, Sterling, director Jonathan Levine (50/50), and Hollywood script doctor Liz Hannah (*The Post*). "We wanted to make a movie that just acknowledged reality as the moviegoing audience at large experiences," says Rogen. Adds Theron: "We had a whole new administration. We felt there was a need to address the state that we're [currently] in."

(THIS PAGE NON-FICTION, IFC FILMS; LONG SHOT: PHILIPPE BROSSET/ONCEUPONATIME; ILLUSTRATION: PAUL ASK; ART BY RUTH AUSTIN/MARSHALIN/212)

THE SECRET HISTORY OF DR. RUTH

Sex therapist and pop culture icon **Dr. Ruth Westheimer** stars in a new documentary about her incredible life and career. BY JESSICA DERSCHOWITZ

DR. RUTH AND SEX TALK GO together like the birds and the bees, but there's so much more to the 90-year-old therapist. The documentary *Ask Dr. Ruth* (in theaters May 3; on Hulu June 1) sheds new light on its short-statured but larger-than-life subject.

Director Ryan White (*The Keepers*) chronicles the ways Westheimer transformed how Americans talk about sex through her radio and TV shows in the '80s and '90s (she famously hosted *Sexually Speaking*). But it's her take on the lesser-known parts of her life, like surviving the Holocaust after leaving her native Germany on a Kindertransport train at 10, that's a revelation.

Westheimer had no reservations about delving into her painful past. "I wanted to show things that people don't know, honoring my background and my parents and my grandmother," she says during an interview at her inviting NYC apartment,

where she's lived for more than five decades. "Once I decided to do it, I knew exactly what I wanted to show. And it came out beautifully."

White follows Westheimer to Switzerland, Israel, and New York as she reflects on her unique journey from German-Jewish refugee to enduring media icon. The doc also explores how Westheimer, despite her apolitical persona, has spoken out on abortion and gay rights—including when her rise to fame came amid the AIDS crisis. "I certainly knew that I had to be outspoken, and to stand up and be counted when people did not want to talk about it," she recalls.

And fittingly for the perennially upbeat Westheimer, she's already thinking about Oscar prospects in the wake of the film's Sundance premiere back in January: "I hope we get a lot of awards!"

↓ Dr. Ruth Westheimer doing her thang



← Seth Rogen and Charlize Theron dance (and kiss) like no one's watching

That said, it was important that they didn't overlook the "comedy" in the making of this raunchy rom-com. "Nothing's funny if the audience doesn't connect with the characters," says Rogen.

One of those unlikely points of connection? Nineties R&B group Boyz II Men, a favorite of the directing/writing team. Early on, they decided Fred and his dream girl would bond over a love of the "End of the Road" crooners. The singers filmed a pivotal cameo in *Long Shot*, providing the musical setting, like any self-respecting rom-com would, for the lovers' reunion as adults. "It was really amazing," Rogen recalls. "So lovely, professional. They're Boyz II Men! They've been Boyz for a while. Let's be honest, they're Men now."

↓ Having their own international affair





True Detective

With the May 10 release of *Pokémon Detective Pikachu*, EW wanted to understand the Pikachu (voiced by **Ryan Reynolds**) behind the magnifying glass. **BY DEREK LAWRENCE**

IT TOOK A LOT OF CONVINCING to get to this moment. Not only with my rightfully nervous editors, but with a subject who wants nothing to do with the spotlight. But here I am, having traveled a great distance to the Four Seasons Ryme City. And it's there, tucked away in a corner booth of the hotel bar, that I find the elusive Detective Pikachu—or Sheldon Van Clue-Snatcher, as he asks that I call him.

From afar, I've long been an admirer of the legendary crime solver who has closed such impossible cases as the Voynich Manuscript and why Paul Rudd doesn't age ("You're welcome," he tells me). Now he's taking on his most personal investigation: finding his missing partner, Harry Goodman (Paul Kitson).

In Harry's absence, his son, Tim (Justice Smith), has teamed up with Pikachu, both for the case and this interview, considering that Tim is one of the few humans who can understand him. But, to all of our surprise, I also possess the special talent, allowing Tim to leave the two of us for an intimate chat. "Thankfully we live in a time in which listening is one's

greatest virtue," Pikachu wisely states as he slowly sips his third cup of coffee.

As someone more accustomed to doing the interrogating, Pikachu is a Pokémon of few words, much preferring one-liners. When I try to broach the status of Harry's case, he cracks, "I could kill you. But then I'd have to tell you." The self-proclaimed "best cop" didn't always want to be a world-famous detective. "I had other plans," he reveals. "But there's a height requirement for Olympic Ribbon Dancing. Of what are they so afraid?" It was in that dark hole of depression and rejection that he stumbled upon his new dream: spending his days holed up at

home, doing nothing but watching TV. "I thought Jessica Fletcher had some moves," he says of Angela Lansbury's character on CBS' long-running crime drama *Murder, She Wrote*.

And from there, he was off. The next stop was the police academy, where he showed a knack for investigative work. Upon graduation, his talents were on full display on the crime-ridden streets of Ryme City. "It's gangster's paradise," Pikachu says of his hometown. Eventually he was the force's go-to detective, proving to be a one-of-a-kind Pokémon. His advice to others hoping to break the mold? "Just do you," he counsels.

It's clear throughout our hour-long chat that there's much more to Detective Pikachu. The season he most identifies with gives a hint about the Pokémon under the detective's cap. "I'm a winter," he reveals. "Most people go home, slip into something more comfortable. My entire life is soft, strokable fur." Also evident as he talks is the feeling that his voice strongly resembles a certain A-list actor. "I get Penélope Cruz a lot," he says with a squeak. "I don't hear it."

Editor's Note: All of Pikachu's answers were penned by Ryan Reynolds.



TV

Edited By | PATRICK GOMEZ @PATRICKGOMEZLA



↑ Brett Gelman and Phoebe Waller-Bridge find something to talk about besides Brexit

Fleabag

DATE

Premieres May 17

TIME

Streaming

NETWORK

Amazon Prime Video

REVIEW BY

Darren Franich
@DarrenFranich

HITCHCOCK DEFINED SUSPENSE AS A BOMB UNDER A table, *tick-tick-tickling* the audience's nerves while characters on screen talk toward impending doom. On *Fleabag*, nobody needs an explosive device. In the Britcom's season 2 premiere, six adults smiling in a restaurant are six bombs with lit fuses.

Creator-star-savant Phoebe Waller-Bridge plays the titular nuke, a never-named Londoner grieving between debaucheries. In season 1, she was a self-declared #BadFeminist and sex-very-positive hedonist. A year later, she's exercising, eating salad, avoiding casual

hookups. Her sister, Claire (Sian Clifford), is self-improving too, off the sauce and on the wagon with husband Martin (Brett Gelman). The siblings force congeniality with their dad (Bill Paterson) and his vain fiancée (Olivia Colman, gleaming with malice). The family sits down for dinner with the cool, sweaty Catholic priest (*Sherlock's* Andrew Scott) who will officiate the holy matrimony of Father and Evil Stepmother.

What follows is one of 2019's best TV episodes, a one-act spiral of unrepresed hostility. Then comes the religious awakening. The fourth-wall-breaking *Fleabag* strikes up an unusual [*wink to camera*] friendship [*pout to camera*] with the priest, who enjoys late-night meaning-of-life chats

THE 19-WORD REVIEW >

Dead to Me (Netflix, May 3) Christina Applegate is tour-de-force brilliant as an angry widow who lets a flighty stranger



LOGLINES

- **Access Denied** Today's Natalie Morales has left NBC's *Access* and *Access Live* after three years.
- **Atypical Move** Sara Gilbert joins season 3 of Netflix's *Atypical* as an irritable ethics professor.

over cans of gin and tonic. "I don't believe in God," our heroine explains, and a painting falls off the priest's wall in response. She's drawn to the holy man, for reasons saintly and blasphemous.

Waller-Bridge is a lacerating screenwriter and an invigorating performer. Some people can do it all—and Scott is an able counterpart as a chatty sad-sack dreamboat unattainably devoted to the Almighty. Waller-Bridge earned buzz last year showrunning *Killing Eve*, which seems a bit lost without her. She's returned to her own star vehicle with her confessional absurdity intact: Surely this is the first time anyone has called a Quaker meeting "very, very erotic."

These six episodes are the end, Waller-Bridge says. And some wrap-up elements are conventional after season 1's primal scream. Gelman's sleaze is fully inhuman, a walking personification of the *Joker* trailer. But Clifford and Waller-Bridge are a transcendent sister act. And the spiritual plotline is transgressive, even Bergman-esque. Pick your Bergman! Waller-Bridge's writing conjures Ingmar's painful religious inquisition, while her performance suggests Ingrid's dazzling beating-heart complexity. Her rapid-fire quips deepen her sincere portrait of a 33-year-old seeking meaning in all the wrong-right places. "What had Jesus done by 33?" one character asks. Well, he never wrote *Fleabag*. **B+**

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(Linda Cardellini) into her life. **B** —KRISTEN BALDWIN



Bad Girls

Gabrielle Union, 46, brings her *Bad Boys II* character to **L.A.'s Finest** (debuting May 13 on Spectrum On Demand)—and she's recruited **Jessica Alba**, 38, as her partner in crime...fighting. **BY DEREK LAWRENCE**

After NBC passed, *Finest* quickly landed at Spectrum. What made this series worth fighting for?

GABRIELLE UNION

We knew it was a winner. Some networks are actually super excited about two strong female leads of color partnering to kick ass and make us laugh. [On Spectrum] we didn't have to make as many compromises as we would have for network TV.

JESSICA ALBA We always thought this had the potential to be so much more than what [network] boundaries allow. It has more edge, more grit, and it's more character-driven.

How would you describe your chemistry?

ALBA You either have chemistry or you don't. I used to joke when I was younger that I could have sexual chemistry with a rock, because I had to deal with lots of really annoying leading men, and I just made the best of that situation, especially

when I had to kiss them. [Laughs] But this was not the case. There's nothing forced; it's natural.

UNION It's nice when there's someone who is your partner on screen, but also your partner in real life. You can just be like, "I need a drink," because life can get messy and crazy, and she gets it and I don't have to explain s--- to her.

ALBA It's great for women to see themselves on screen. We've grown, we both have families, people know us and our personal lives. I think they see two women who have lived a life and can bring that weight of our experiences to the table, and not just be a 20-year-old ingenue.

UNION They've seen us being grown-ass women in real life, and grown-ass women in real life don't get to partner up and have fun, action, drama, comedy, and sex. Usually you have to lose something. Because they are

like, "You've got to be likable and can't be too smart or strong."

ALBA You don't want to intimidate the lead guy! There's always that. Or "You can't have more jokes than the lead guy."

UNION And we're like, "No, I want Jessica to have more." And she's like, "No, I want Gab to have more."

Why do you think that non-*Bad Boys* fans should tune in?

ALBA This was always the type of movie that I wanted to be in; the *Die Hards*, the *Bad Boys*, *Lethal Weapon*. I was like, "Why can't women be the leads in these types of environments?" And for me, this was like my little kid-actress dream come true.

UNION It's pure escapism. The world is f---ing depressing, and this show is funny, dramatic, action-packed, sexy, and has two badass chicks in their fullness and having the best frickin' time.

THE REC-ING CREW

A decade after the premiere of *Parks and Recreation*, some of the NBC comedy's minor, but memorable, characters share stories from their time in Pawnee. **BY NICK ROMANO**

1

JOAN CALLAMEZZO

PLAYED BY MO COLLINS

"One thing that happens when you get Mo Collins on set, I tend to improv," the actress says of playing this "legendary news-woman." Example: the season 5 episode "Emergency Response," in which Joan passed out on air, forcing Ron [Nick Offerman] to answer viewer calls. Director Dean Holland told Collins to keep shifting into a different passed-out position every time Ron took a call. "I got ridiculous with it. I was plankin!" Collins remembers. "I thought, 'None of that will be usable.' Turns out, all of it was. Collins formulated Joan by thinking back to her days living in Minnesota, "where you'd catch those crazy cable-access shows." But she never forgot what the casting director was looking for in her first audition: "I'd always still try to have some green[ness] somewhere in there."

2

PERD HAPLEY

PLAYED BY JAY JACKSON

Pawnee's news anchor had a plethora of TV programs—including *Ya Heard? With Perd*, *The Final Word With Perd*, and his movie-review program *Lights, Camera, Perd*—but Jackson says there was talk of another show that never made it to air: "It was called *Making It Happen With Perd* because we had shot some prop stuff, pictures for cups and stock photos." Jackson worked as a reporter for a CBS station in Los Angeles before landing the role of Perd, which led to other acting gigs, but he still occasionally helps aspiring TV anchors develop their demo reels on red carpets. "All the other reporters

would come out: 'Are you shooting something for *Parks and Rec*? Is this a skit?'" he says. Nope, it's just Jay.

3

ETHEL BEAVERS

PLAYED BY HELEN SLAYTON-HUGHES

In the season 7 episode "Two Funerals," Pawnee's courthouse stenographer eulogized the mayor (her former paramour). But on the day of the shoot, "the coffin where I was supposed to kiss my ex-lover was empty," Slayton-Hughes recalls. "So it was just pretend, and I thought that was the end of that scene. But a couple of days later they called me and said, 'We need you very much to come in tomorrow and reshoot that scene.' I felt terrible because I thought I must've done it very badly. Why would we have to reshoot a whole scene? And then I went in the next day and there was Bill Murray." Series co-creator Mike Schur and his team tried to fill the role with Arnold Schwarzenegger back in season 3, but he had prior obligations governing California. For the final season, they weren't sure if Murray would be able to do it, either. "They explained to me that they couldn't shoot the whole scene until they knew he was available. I was thrilled," Slayton-Hughes says. "And then I got to be hugged by Bill Murray for a long, long time."

4

GARTH BLUNDIN

PLAYED BY PATTON OSWALT

Pawnee's staunch constitutionalist knew how to filibuster. Though only a few minutes of it made it to air, Oswalt says he launched into an eight-minute speech about comic-book





movies as part of filming the season 5 episode "Article Two." "They didn't yell cut and I just kept going," Oswalt, a lover of all things geek, says. "It was on the spot, I wasn't thinking about it at all—I wasn't thinking of doing an eight-minute monologue."



5 **MONA-LISA SAPERSTEIN**
PLAYED BY JENNY SLATE

The Parks and Rec writers wanted to create an older-woman love interest for Aziz Ansari's Tom, but "we couldn't find an actor that made sense for the part and time was ticking," says Joe Mande, a writer who also played tech-savvy Morris Leprosi on the show. "Out of nowhere, it became about, 'What if Jean-Ralphio [Ben Schwartz] had a sister?'" Very quickly we landed on, 'Okay, her name is Mona-Lisa and she's just like Jean-Ralphio. Who could play that part?' And I threw out the name Jenny Slate and everyone was like, 'Perfect.' I'm friends with her, so I texted her myself and asked her if she was available next Monday, perhaps?" She was.

6 **BRANDI MAXXXX**
PLAYED BY MARA MARINI

Marini knows she didn't get the role of "porn star with a heart of gold" Brandi Maxxxx the "correct" way. A few days after getting good feedback at a workshop hosted by Parks and Rec casting director Dorian Frankel, Marini learned (from an actor friend she'd been "underground" paying to get info about auditions) that Frankel was casting a new role. Posing as her own manager, "I made a fake email address and emailed her," says Marini. "Oh, you met my client at this workshop, she'd be perfect for this role. You should bring her in." And she brought me in and I booked it."

7 **ORIN**
PLAYED BY ERIC ISENHOWER

"A really weird character, really strange, not a vampire." That's

6

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MARRA/NETFLIX; IMAGE 101

7

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MARRA/NETFLIX; IMAGE 101

8

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MARRA/NETFLIX; IMAGE 101

9

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MARRA/NETFLIX; IMAGE 101

how Isenhower remembers the casting notice for April Ludgate's (Aubrey Plaza) BFF. But it was the producers who gave the actor the key to unlocking the enigma that was the macabre performance-art enthusiast. "The most interesting thing to me was what they said he might talk a little bit like John Malkovich," he recalls. And while Orin was a man of few words, Isenhower says the audition side contained a "pretty sizable" amount of dialogue for the character: "They wrote up a whole interaction between Orin and Tom and they said, 'He's never gonna talk this much, but we have to make sure that you really understand the essence of this guy.'"

8 **CHANCE FRENML**
PLAYED BY JEFFREY MARKLE

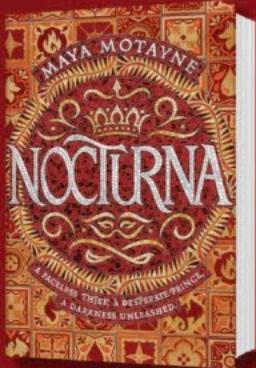
Markle started out as a nameless town-hall character who was supposed to get the crowd chanting about things like ham and mayonnaise sandwiches. In the fourth season, the chanting man got a name. "My agent called and said, 'You have a name now, but I think you're Swedish,'" Markle recalls. "They came up with the name Chance because of the chanting. The last name was Frenml. I have no idea where that came from."

9 **BOBBY NEWPORT**
PLAYED BY PAUL RUDD

Bobby Newport was as wealthy as he was clueless. Heir to the Sweetarts fortune, he ran for the city-council seat against Leslie and nearly won the election. Parks and Rec writer Mike Scully recalls Rudd's interesting method for keeping in character while filming a scene in the season 4 episode "The Debate": "On his podium he had a yellow legal pad, and I noticed on it there was a drawing of giant women's breasts and the Van Halen logo. I saw it and I cracked up and I asked him what it was. [Paul] said, 'I think this is what this guy would be thinking while he's doing a political debate.'"



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Epic Reads

POP CULTURE OF MY LIFE

KATE MCKINNON

Ahead of her—and her sister Emily's—star-studded Audible audio series *Heads Will Roll* (launching May 2), the *SNL* star, 35, reflects on her many role models and how her childhood was just a big joke. **BY LYNETTE RICE**

MY EARLIEST COMIC INSPIRATION

My dad would quote [Saturday Night Live's stop-motion character] [1] **Mr. Bill** and say, "Oooh noooo." He would also quote the land-shark. I just thought those were American phrases people said. *SNL* was part of the DNA of our house, for sure.

THE MOMENT I KNEW I WAS FUNNY

In elementary school I started doing impressions of my teachers and found that my classmates were laughing. I thought, "Oh, this feels good, I'll try to do this for as long as I can."

COMEDIANS I GREW UP IDOLIZING

Catherine O'Hara from her work in the Christopher Guest movies; Tracey Ullman; [2] **Molly Shannon, Ana Gasteyer, Cheri Oteri**, and Will Ferrell from *SNL*. I watched *SNL* [starting at age 13], and the part at the end where various hugs on stage, I'd think, "Oh my God, if I don't get to do that.... I have to be there. That's the most fun you could ever have." I think



of that every time I do it each week.

DEFINING MOMENT ON SNL

Playing Hillary Clinton [after the 2016 election at the piano] was a high-impact moment for everyone, no matter which way you voted. It was a big week for our country. I was so worried about messing up the piano, that was really all I was thinking about. It's historically been a problem if you have ever been to any of my childhood piano recitals.

STAND-UP SPECIALS I RESPECT THE MOST

I've watched Ellen DeGeneres' *Here and Now* [2003] and [3] **Jerry Seinfeld's** *I'm Telling You for the Last Time* [1998] about 70 times. I know them by heart.

BEST ADVICE

Lorne Michaels taught me to infuse everything with a little bit of joy and heart.



Warrior

DATE Fridays | TIME 10 p.m.

NETWORK Cinemax

REVIEW BY Darren Franich @DarrenFranich

CAN ONE GOOD CHARACTER MAKE A SHOW?

On Cinemax's flip-kick serial, Jason Tobin plays Young Jun, a crime-lord princeling in 1878 San Francisco. He's a ravenous horndog who Swiss-cheeses enemies with twin daggers. Tobin, great forever ago in Justin Lin's *Better Luck Tomorrow*, gives this loon real charisma—and melancholy. He's a Chinese man who's never been to China, a Chinatown native the wrong color for his fellow Americans. "I don't belong anywhere," he says, sadly, right before he falls in love with a prostitute, right before his white shirt splats red with somebody else's blood.

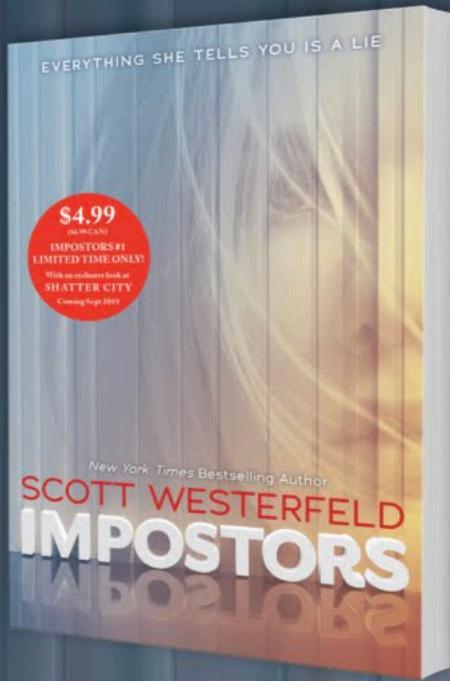
Young Jun represents the boldest possibilities of this period piece, which blends the fascinating history of true-life Chinatown with the cinematic legacy of Bruce Lee (whose daughter, Shannon Lee, is an executive producer alongside Lin) and all the sexy violence that premium cable allows. There is somber talk about fair labor practices, immigrant unrest, the sorrowful legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad—and every social malady preludes another choreographed fight.

The possibility of a weekly fight scene with *The Raid*'s Jon Taslim could make this show a Friday-night success, but the freshman drama is hit-or-miss so far. It's the Rockstar Games version of history: dudes pondering *America* inside whorehouses between kill sessions. There are so many Irish people, and they are so boring. You have to watch the May 3 episode, though, a breakaway trip to a Nevada saloon. Racial tension simmers. Romance blooms across cultures. And some outlaw cowboys show up. It's not good history, but it's bloody okay. **B-**

Andrew Koji kicks it up a notch



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3 QUESTIONS FOR

LAURA CARMICHAEL

Best known as Lady Edith on *Downton Abbey*, the actress, 32, goes further into the past in Starz's Philippa Gregory-inspired *The Spanish Princess* (debuting May 5 at 8 p.m.). BY MAUREEN LEE LENKER

1

Were you already a fan of Philippa Gregory's books? I'd seen the previous series [based on her *The Cousins' War* novels]. I love her perspective, looking at history from a different point of view, telling it from these female voices.

2

What fascinates you about your character, Lady Margaret Pole? She had such a varied experience of being a royal. She was destined to be near the throne, and ended up being married off to someone and having this family. That becomes the most important thing—to keep her family safe.

3

She and Edith are both long-suffering members of their families. What draws you to this? Poor Edith, now it's going to be poor Lady Pole. I don't compare them, but the stories I like show how people struggle on even when things are hard. It's more realistic to watch people soldier on when things are painful.

Inbar Lavi
and Tom
Ellis veg
(and cheese
puff) out



The Devil Wears Tube Socks

After being canceled by Fox and resurrected by Netflix, *Lucifer* heads into new—more casual-wear—territory for season 4 (launching May 8).

BY CHANCELLOR AGARD

THE DEVIL'S WORK IS never done. Canceled by Fox, *Lucifer* lives on, thanks to Netflix. The team behind the fantasy cop drama is promising a biblical shift in season 4 as Tom Ellis' titular, dashing fallen angel indulges his devilish side, motivated by one biblically significant woman: Eve (Inbar Lavi), you know,

of Adam and Eve.

"A lot of this season is about the Jekyll and Hyde of Lucifer," Ellis says of this 10-episode offering, which picks up in the wake of Det. Chloe Decker (Lauren German) finally realizing that Lucifer is actually Satan. Further complicating matters, Eve abandons heaven to find the bad boy she fell in love with years ago, which forces Lucifer to question if he's really the monstrous devil or the good man Chloe was helping him become. "Spoiler: He's going to tilt more toward the devilish side for a good portion of our season," says co-showrunner Joe Henderson.

Things get romantic fast for Eve and Lucifer,

but "I wouldn't say he's the most comfortable person in the relationship," says Ellis, who teases there's more to the cozy Netflix-and-chill scene (pictured above) than may appear. "That image ties in with something that Lucifer is trying to achieve by not being himself."

And as Lucifer finds himself, *Lucifer* feels more itself than ever before. "We focus more on the serialized mythology than the procedural aspects this season," says co-showrunner Illy Modrovich. "And we have pushed things a bit—we see Tom's naked bum quite a bit and there's a hair more violence, or at least the darker side of things." Hell yeah.



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**FINALE
PREVIEW**

♪ Hair-raising: Adam Brody and Leighton Meester's characters in a flashback

SINGLED OUT

Leighton Meester, 33, and husband Adam Brody, 39, team up to play exes in the season finale of ABC's *Single Parents* (May 8 at 9:30 p.m.). BY MAUREEN LEE LENKER

WHEN LEIGHTON MEESTER suggested that her husband, Adam Brody, guest on her sitcom, she didn't envision him as Derek, the long-discussed-but-never-seen father of her character's son. "I definitely was like, 'He could play a potential fun character at any point,'" she says. "I didn't anticipate him for Angie's ex."

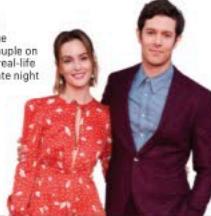
Brody will appear in the season 1 finale of *Single Parents* as a current-day Derek working in food service as well as in flashbacks to a time when he was a wannabe rock star with Angie as his groupie. "We filmed on Sunset Boulevard at night, and I was like, 'Man, we really are this metal couple,'" Meester recalls.

Up to this point, Derek has been "kind of this mysterious character," Meester says. "This mystery, this legend, more than a human being," which makes his current life "a very funny reveal." But don't expect Brody to be a permanent addition. "I don't know that Angie has it

in her to want to make it work with him," Meester admits. "Her child has never met him, and all that she's had is this sense of rage and resentment toward him." Not that life imitated art in any way while filming. "That would be an awesome way to do couples' therapy," Meester says with a laugh. "But just being around Adam, and being on set with him, it's fun. It's comfortable. He's really funny, and I enjoy everything I do with him. Working with him is just the icing on the cake."

Check out the next issue of EW for tons more TV finale scoops.

→
The couple on a real-life date night



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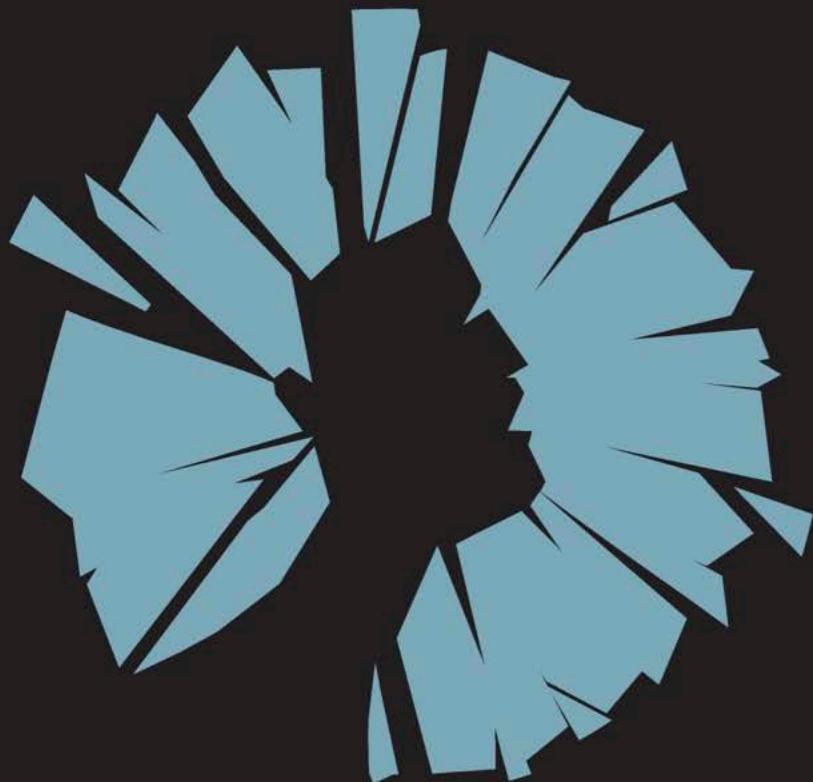
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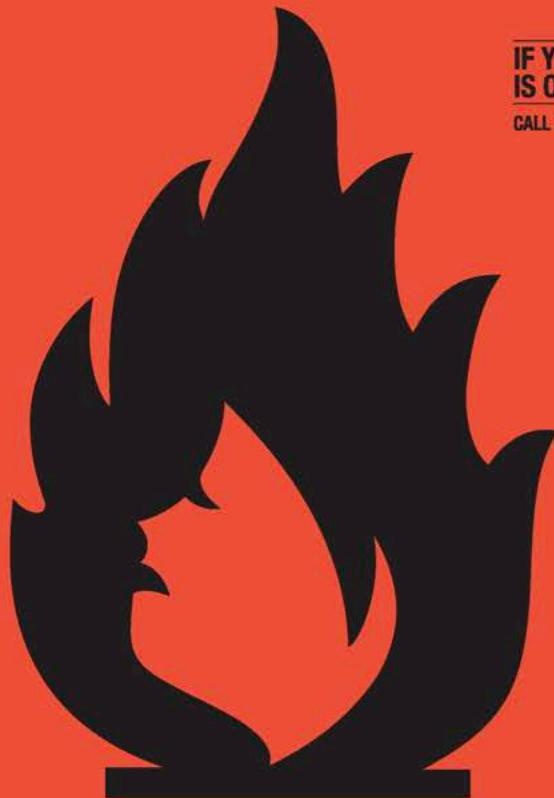
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GRE



(From left)
Christopher
Abbott (center);
George Clooney
and Julie
Ann Emery

Joseph Heller's classic comes to the small screen with the powerhouse combo of **George Clooney, Kyle Chandler, and Christopher Abbott.**

BY SAMANTHA HIGHFILL
@SAMHIGHFILL

AT CATCH

G

GEORGE CLOONEY HAS A THEORY: "THERE is never a bad time to talk about the insanity of war." That's why he said yes to Hulu's *Catch-22* remake (premiering May 17), despite his original reaction to the idea, which was "F---, no. I wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot pole." Clooney's wariness stemmed from several factors, not least of which was *Catch-22*'s legacy. Joseph Heller's 1961 novel, which follows John Yossarian, a young bombardier in World War II, is regarded as a classic, and was memorably adapted for the big screen by Mike Nichols (*Working Girl*, *The Birdcage*) in 1970 with stars Alan Arkin and Martin Balsam. And even for those not familiar with the book or film, odds are they know the phrase itself, which entered the lexicon after its publication.

A *catch-22* is, essentially, an endless, inescapable loop. For Yossarian, it means he's trapped in a war. "The *catch-22* is that the only way you can get out of the military is if you're crazy, but if you know enough to say you're crazy, then you're not crazy," Clooney explains. That's the central idea of Heller's extremely complicated story, which jumps between various character perspectives. "It's a dense, kaleidoscopic novel that does not follow any particular linear shape or structure," executive producer Luke Davies says. Which is precisely why it took Davies and his co-writer David Michôd nine months to complete even just the outline for the story, which they

ultimately decided would work best in the format of a six-episode miniseries.

By the time Clooney read the scripts, he couldn't turn the project away. "They did such a beautiful job," says the 57-year-old actor-director-producer. "So we thought, 'Well, s---, I guess we're going to be doing *Catch-22* now.'" Clooney and his producing partner Grant Heslov—who each directed two episodes, as did Ellen Kuras—then set out to discover their Yossarian and found him in Christopher Abbott, best known for

his work on HBO's *Girls*. "I didn't know him when he came in to read, and he just blew us away," Clooney says. "He can break your heart and he can do comedy. That's rare."

Abbott has to flex both muscles as Yossarian, a sane man in a world of people who are either insane or not paying attention. "It's the tail end of the war, and he's noticing that they're sending guys out on these missions, and all he's saying is 'Why?'" Abbott says. Yossarian asks that question many times throughout the series as his mission



“It really was a great experience,” Chandler (right) says of filming





(From left) Kyle Chandler delivers a briefing as Colonel Cathcart; Abbott's John Yossarian gets ready for a swim

count—the very thing he must complete in order to go home—keeps rising. “He constantly feels like he’s screaming down an empty hallway,” says the 33-year-old Connecticut native. “He feels very alone. He doesn’t understand how his friends are so willing to give their life over to something that he thinks is essentially insane.”

But this isn’t a commentary on war. It’s a commentary on the bureaucracy of war. And in Yossarian’s case, his enemies aren’t the German soldiers he’s bombing, but rather the people preventing him from going home. For much of the series, that’s Colonel Cathcart, the man responsible for raising Yossarian’s mission count time and time again.

Clooney himself was originally set to play Cathcart, but as a producer and a director, he had enough on his plate. That’s when Clooney thought of Kyle Chandler, with whom he’d worked on 2012’s Oscar winner *Argo*. “The thing about Kyle is there’s never a moment where he’s on camera that you don’t believe him,” Clooney says. “And I’ve never seen him do anything like this.” In this role, Chandler leaves behind the heartwarming sincerity with which he once delivered Coach

Taylor’s epic locker-room pep talks on *Friday Night Lights* for a man who is anything but a mentor to Yossarian. “Cathcart is representing everything that is absolutely insane about the situation at hand,” Chandler, 53, says. “This war turns people, and I think he just went mad.” And if Cathcart isn’t the one risking Yossarian’s life, it’s Lieutenant Scheisskopf—a smaller role that Clooney felt he could tackle—who’s upping the mission count. And above him, there’s General Dredle (Peter Guinness). As Clooney puts it, “S—rolls downhill.” And for Yossarian, that means his nightmare has no end.

But Heller’s novel isn’t revered simply for the tragedy in its tale. It’s also an extremely satirical look at the absurdity of war. All of which is to say: It’s funny. It’s really, really funny. “There is one insanely ridiculous

scene where I tell Chris to drop his pants, I want to see his balls,” Clooney says. “That’s not something I’ve ever said in a film before.” Furthermore, Chandler recalls reading an introduction to the book written by former Virginia senator Jim Webb. “He was in Vietnam and there was a lull in a battle, and he hears one of his buddies laughing his ass off in a foxhole across the way,” Chandler says. “And he was reading *Catch-22*. It’s a very serious issue that allows for great humor.” It’s that mix of comedy and truly dark drama that makes *Catch-22* stand out. But its success will boil down to one thing, as far as Clooney’s concerned. “It all rests on whether or not you root for a guy who’s a coward and who does a lot of crappy things,” Clooney says of Yossarian’s fight to escape the war. “I believe, because of Chris, you do.” ♦

“[CATCH-22] IS A HARD BOOK TO ADAPT. I THINK THIS IS THE BEST VERSION OF WHAT IT COULD BE. IT WAS TRULY ONE OF THE BEST THINGS I’VE READ IN A LONG TIME.”

— CHRISTOPHER ABBOTT

What to Watch

A handy guide to solve your daily TV dilemmas*
Edited By | GERRAD HALL @GERRADHALL



Everyone will
be talking about
it tomorrow

MONDAY APRIL 29

The Show Must Go On: The Queen + Adam Lambert Story
8-10PM | ABC
As this doc reiterates frequently, there's no replacing Freddie Mercury. But by some miracle, someone came along with the vocal range and stage persona required to take on the mantle of Queen's frontman. The special tracks the band's listless years following Mercury's death alongside Adam Lambert's rise on *American Idol*, and the evolution of their collaboration into a powerhouse touring act. It's a bit overlong and not particularly incisive, but it's a breezy watch with a heartwarming pro-LGBTQ message—plus plenty of clips from Queen + Lambert's electrifying concerts. B+ —*Tyler Aquilina*



The Young and the Restless
CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS
CBS
Following a week of shows about Neil Young's death, this episode pays tribute to the man who played him—Kristoff St. John, who died in February. Shemar Moore, Victoria Rowell, and more of St. John's TV family return to share memories and unforgettable moments.

Nature: American Spring Live
CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS
PBS

From California's Sequoia National Park to the Florida Everglades, observe nature's annual rebirth as it happens in 20-plus locations across the country in this three-night event.

TUE APR 30

Season Premiere: The 100
9-10PM | THE CW
Some of the surviving prisoners are scooping out a mysterious new planet to (hopefully) inhabit after that destructive Earthly battle in the season 5 finale against Wonkru—who are facing the repercussions of their actions. Like calling themselves Wonkru.



WED MAY 1



Series Debut: Best Room Wins
10-11PM | BRAVO
Luxury for less. That's the motto of this new home-makeover show hosted by *Trading Spaces* alum Genevieve Gorder that pits two interior designers who have different clients with similar tastes against each other. After visiting multimillion-dollar "inspiration homes"—in the debut, it's all about Hollywood Regency in an opulent Palm Springs spread—the designers get \$25,000 and four days to work their magic. Like any good makeover, there is drama along the way (Not enough wallpaper! Untrusting homeowners! [shakes fist]), but it's also fun, charming, and full of style. B+ —*Gerrad Hall*



Devour
it all at once

The Act

STREAMING | HULU

If you want to feel sick to your stomach (and that's a compliment) for eight relentless episodes, take in this true-crime phenomenon before its May 1 finale. Based on a Buzzfeed article by Michelle Dean (who co-created the show), *The Act* tells the story of mother and daughter Dee Dee and Gypsy Rose Blanchard. Gypsy is very ill—as is constantly hammered home by her mother—until it's revealed that Gypsy might not actually be sick at all. Terrifying performances from Patricia Arquette and Joey King pair mommy issues with musical cues that fellow Hulu shows should take a note from. It's one hell of a *Mommie Dearest* ride. B+ —*Kerensa Cadenas*



*THE SHOW HAS BEEN CANCELLED. "ADAM LAMBERT STORY" AIRS AT 8PM ON ABC. "NATURE: AMERICAN SPRING LIVE" AIRS AT 8PM ON PBS. "THE ACT" AIRS ON HULU.

MORE AWARDS, OKURRR?

After a stellar job as last year's host, Kelly Clarkson returns as emcee of the Billboard Music Awards (May 1, 8 p.m. on NBC). She's one of many who will perform, including Mariah Carey, the 2019 Icon Award recipient. Here are the top nominees.



THURSDAY MAY 2

EMERGENCY CROSSOVER!

Grey's Anatomy and Station 19

8-10PM | ABC
A massive blaze sends Fire Chief Ripley (Brett Tucker) to Grey Sloan Memorial in the first part of the crossover directed by Grey's Jesse Williams (Dr. Jackson Avery) and featuring appearances by Jaina Lee Ortiz, Jason George, and Boris Kodjoe. In the second hour, the tension continues with the station team in a state of anxiety as their buddy faces an uncertain future. The crossover was particularly thrilling for returning director Williams, who got to show off his mad skillz. "I busted out the crane for a dope shot that carried our steady-cam operator into the hospital and [through an] entire scene in one take," he says proudly. Talk about a smooth operator.



Tuca & Bertie

STREAMING | NETFLIX

It's fitting that Netflix's adult animated comedy *Tuca & Bertie* (debuts May 3) comes after *Broad City* concluded. "[*Broad City*] was the first time I felt fully represented by a TV show...so it's a huge influence," says *Tuca & Bertie* creator Lisa Hanawalt. But while that Comedy Central series traced Abbi Jacobson and Ilana Glazer's journey through their 20s, Hanawalt wanted to capture women in their 30s. Tuca (Tiffany Haddish) is a carefree toucan living next door to her anxiety-ridden songbird bestie Bertie (Ali Wong), as the two navigate adulthood. "If you don't have your s--- together by a certain age, you start to feel like you're left behind," Hanawalt says, "and that's a feeling I wanted to tap into." Who (tu)can't relate to that?

FRI MAY 3



Portals to Hell

10-11PM | TRAVEL CHANNEL
Long obsessed with the supernatural, Jack Osbourne is living out his dreams as cohost and EP of this series. In the latest episode, he and paranormal researcher Katrina Weidman investigate a real-life Phantom of the Opera in McConnelsville, Ohio, where a "deeper mystery" is brewing in the local opera house basement, teases Weidman. That's where Osbourne was targeted. "I was totally fine, awake, and alert at one point, and in the next, I felt like I'd been drugged," he says. "Every ounce of energy felt like it was drained out of me...whatever happened was incredibly strange."



SAT MAY 4

Paris, Wine & Romance

9-11PM | HALLMARK

Is that a wine bottle being uncorked that I hear? In this movie, Isabella competes in a Paris wine competition but learns adult grape juice is more than just a business, thanks to the handsome Jacques.

Saturday Night Live

11:30PM-1AM | NBC
Host Adam Sandler. Musical guest Shawn Mendes. 'Nuff said.

SUN MAY 5

Season Finale Bake You Rich

10-11PM | FOOD NETWORK

In this search for the next great nationally sold baked good, Buddy Valastro and his team check out tiramisu, stuffed chocolate cake, a Southern staple, and a Hungarian delicacy. But in trying to mass produce these desserts, the bakers discover that size matters. Um, duh!

A COLD AND CRAZY CASE

The Disappearance of Susan Cox Powell

7-9PM | OXYGEN

Susan Powell, 28, vanished in winter 2009. Two years later, her husband, Josh, who had a strange alibi for the time of her death, killed their two young sons and then himself. This two-night in-depth investigation examines their rocky marriage as well as unearthed videotapes of Susan's father-in-law, which reveal his sexual obsession with her. Stay tuned for a shocking theory about her disappearance.

What to Watch

ABC-SON FINALES

Laugh alert! ABC's Wednesday-night comedies wrap up May 8, and EW has an exclusive look at their season finales.



THE GOLDBERGS
8 p.m.



SCHOOLED
8:30 p.m.



MODERN FAMILY
9 p.m.



SINGLE PARENTS
9:30 p.m.

Everyone will be talking about it tomorrow



MONDAY MAY 6



Series Finale
Shadowhunters
8-10:30PM | FREEFORM
Clary tries to unite Shadowhunters and Downworlders, and makes a big sacrifice after Jonathan's reign of terror starts, while Alec struggles to help Magnus. And yes, those are wedding bells you hear! Just call me a cakehunter!



The Bachelorette Reunion

8-10PM | ABC

The Bachelor mansion plays host to 12 former bachelorettes, who reunite for a special (subtitled "The Biggest Bachelorette Reunion in Bachelor History Ever!") to celebrate the franchise's 15 seasons. "It's a trip down memory lane," teases host Chris Harrison. "They all have a special place in my heart."

TUE MAY 7

Series Debut

Texicanas

10-11PM | BRAVO

"San Antonio's a big, little city," says Penny Ayarzagotia, costar of this new unscripted series. "Everybody knows everyone, especially if you're Mexican." At its core, the show feels like a beat-for-beat remake of any *Real Housewives* series. Where this differs (aside from the interwoven use of Spanish and English) is in the exploration of fluid cultural dynamics between Mexico and Southern Texas, and its on-the-nose focus on pressing social tensions, from green cards to domestic violence to the roles of "traditional" and "modern" Mexican women. **C** —Lexi Vollero



WED MAY 8



Season Finale

Empire

8-9PM | FOX

Season 5 has been a roller coaster on screen and off, and that continues with the "emotional" conclusion. The finale features Andre (Trai Byers) clinging to life, while a confrontation between Lucious (Terrence Howard) and Cookie (Taraji P. Henson) could end their marriage and her loyalty. And we still have that mysterious flash-forward death to solve. "We finally learn who's in the coffin, and it sends shockwaves through the Lyon clan that will reverberate through next season and beyond," teases showrunner Brett Mahoney. "Have your hankies ready. You will need them."



Devour it all at once

JOSH HOPKINS RECOMMENDS...



Ray Donovan

STREAMING | SHOWTIME.COM

Wrapping its sixth season earlier this year, this Showtime series about a fixer for the rich and famous "consistently hits the mark," says *Whiskey Cavalier*'s Josh Hopkins. Despite lots of changes (including actors, story lines, moving from L.A. to New York), the show "has managed to reinvent itself while keeping the same level of gritty drama and wink-at-you humor." With a cast that includes Liev Schreiber and Jon Voight, it's Dash Mihok and Graham Rogers who Hopkins loves "to watch the most." "Dash's depiction of Bunchy is all at once frightening, hilarious, and heartbreaking. Mihok can turn an intense scene on its ear with one silly look." No fixing required.



“

6:00

Gwyneth Paltrow Will Not Like This Episode.*

—AL JEAN, The Simpsons showrunner, on the season 30 finale (May 12, 8 p.m. on Fox), in which Marge opens a New Age store and sells a line of Goop-like products after healing crystals seem to be helping Bart raise his grades



THURSDAY MAY 9

THIS IS US...GIVING YOU A GUEST-STAR ALERT!

Superstore

8:30-9PM | NBC

The Cloud 9 employees find themselves in the midst of a social media scandal after photos of a mess at their store go viral. Amy (America Ferrera) and Jonah (Ben Feldman) try to use it to their favor, but Dina (Lauren Ash) won't stop until she finds the anonymous tweeter. Enter corporate HR rep Luanne, played by *This Is Us* star Chrissy Metz. "We're excited to show people Chrissy's funny side," creator Justin Spitzer says. "Even though Luanne is a fairly serious, no-nonsense character, her grounded responses in this heightened situation gave us some of the funniest moments in the episode." Especially once she starts butting heads with Dina, who "sees her as a kindred spirit—until Luanne starts to reject some of Dina's more extreme ideas." Ah, so Dina also thinks Kate Pearson is dead in that *TIU* flash-forward?



FRI MAY 10



Season Premiere

Sneaky Pete

STREAMING | AMAZON PRIME VIDEO
As Marius, er, "Pete" (Giovanni Ribisi) returns to the farm, season 3 dives right into the drama, kicking off with a (literal) crash-boom-bang and a showdown with Julia (Marin Ireland). At this point, Pete's family is practically unrecognizable—the once-unified unit is divided by myriad hard-to-swallow truths. Tempted to flee and return to his con life (he can't shake thoughts of an old flame, his "emotional heroin"), Pete makes good on his titular nickname after an arrest. But with the real Pete (Ethan Embry) out of prison, is that Marius' bigger problem, or the genuine feelings he has for his faux family? **B+** —Lexi Vollero

SAT MAY 11

Season Finale Restaurant Impossible

9-10PM | FOOD NETWORK

In Arizona, chef Robert Irvine tries to rescue Copper Steer Steakhouse. What started as a dream for the owner has turned into a nightmare, losing money month after month. Sounds like the chef has his hands—and stomach—full.



SUN MAY 12



Series Finale

Veep

10:50-11:30PM | HBO
Hail to the Veep, which is winding down its Emmy-plated, insult-packed, seven-season run—not to mention the presidential run of self-consumed Selina (Julia Louis-Dreyfus), whose opposition includes irritable Jonah (Timothy Simons). EP David Mandel describes the finale as "happy," "sad," and "epic," while Simons reassures there won't be some super-sentimental send-off for these malcontents: "It will probably fit into that thing of, 'This really made me laugh. I loved spending time with all those people. And holy s---, they are the worst group of people I've ever seen.'"

WE CAN'T STOP TALKING ABOUT...

3%

STREAMING | NETFLIX

Another series about twentysomethings rebelling against a society run by Machiavellian adults isn't the most groundbreaking premise nowadays, but this Brazilian sleeper hit is a uniquely refreshing remedy to the cliché. Think *The Hunger Games* meets *The Maze Runner*, with a dash of *Lord of the Flies*—but less depressing, more bingeable. Set in a dystopian future, 20-year-olds annually apply for "The Process," a competition of physical and psychological challenges that whittles the group down to just 3 percent, those of which earn the chance to live in the elite utopia "Offshore." With two short seasons (a third is coming), it's also a cushy way to help conquer your crippling fear of subtitles. —Alison Wild



Written and reported by Gerrad Hall,
Derek Lawrence, Piya Sinha-Roy, and Dan Snierson

Music

Edited By | ALEX SUSKIND @ALEXJSUSKIND



THE OVEREND REBECCA SAYFIRE/IMAGE: SZA: RANDY SMALLIN/AMERICAS: SCOTT NICHOLAS/HANDOUT/GETTY IMAGES FOR MTV



Pink

TITLE
Hurts 2B Human

LABEL
RCA

GENRE

Pop

REVIEW BY

Maura Johnston @maura

NEXT YEAR MARKS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF PINK'S crash-landing into pop. Since then, she's become one of music's most beloved real talkers, blending ripped-from-the-journals lyrics with radio-ready beats and high-flying arena antics. Sonically, she's a shape-shifter, applying her strong rasp to confidence-spiking

rallying cries ("Don't Let Me Get Me," "F**kin' Perfect"), kiss-off anthems ("So What," "U + Ur Hand"), and sumptuous ballads ("Who Knew," "Try"). But the through-line in all of Pink's material has been her willingness to pierce the veil of celebrity with lyrics that talk about her low points—arguing with L.A. Reid over her career direction, dealing with the fallout from her parents' divorce, agitation over an elected leader's doublespeak.

Hurts 2B Human, her eighth album, implies a misery-fest. But Pink is far savvier than that. Instead she melds the pugilistic spirit that made her greatest hits stick with ideas borrowed from all over 2019's pop

THE 26-WORD REVIEW >

SZA, the Weeknd, Travis Scott, "Power Is Power" A Game of Thrones-inspired single filled with distorted



NOTEWORTHY

- **A Sucker for Them** The Jonas Brothers will release their new album, *Happiness Begins*, in June.
- **Slowhand on the Road** Eric Clapton announced a tour leading up to his Crossroads Guitar Festival.

map. *Hurts*'s stylistic breadth, linked from song to song by Pink's world-weary yet optimistic outlook, makes it an enjoyable—and, at times, relatable—pop album from one of the Y2K pop boom's veterans.

The most intriguing moments come when Pink flips the country-crossover ideal that artists like Maren Morris and Kacey Musgraves have been employing to their benefit over the past year; while they propelled themselves from country's confines into pop's more lady-friendly arena, Pink takes a few return trips on *Hurts*, showing how her true-to-life lyrics and soulful bellow can play in Nashville's finest honky-tonks. "Love Me Anyway," her duet with Chris Stapleton, pairs Pink's rough-hewn voice with a sweetly forlorn slide guitar, a contrast that packs a wallop even before Stapleton comes in for vocal harmonies. But the song would probably retain more of its punch if it laid off on the string section, which adds boldface and italics to the already intense back-and-forth the two engage in on the song's extended outro.

In "The Last Song of Your Life," a tour de force collaboration with her longtime creative partner Billy Mann, Pink's voice cracks on the chorus as she dreams of rekindling the old days. "90 Days," meanwhile, might be one of the most stunning songs she's ever recorded. A duet with the singer-songwriter Wrabel, it's urgent and desperate, an as-it-happens elegy for a doomed relationship set against a bleak background of piano and distant, robot-distorted vocals. It resists resolution in the same way that it resists classification. On the album, it's in between "My Attic," a bittersweet ode to long-kept secrets, and

the title track, a duet with Gen Z poet laureate Khalid that celebrates life's troughs as a way of bringing people closer together.

As with most Pink albums, the song-to-song shifts result in some misfires. "Hustle" lets Pink jump, jive, and wail her mission statement ("don't try to hustle me") over electro-swing that veers between stripped-down verses and blown-out, whoop-whoop-assisted choruses. "Courage" shines bright like a diamond while swinging from the chandelier—which is to say that it was co-written by Sia, making its chorus' existential musings about having "the courage to change" an almost-too-easy punchline, even with Pink's nervy vocal. Similarly, "(Hey Why) Miss You Sometime" is a mess of cultural references and vocal processing.

But those missteps are raised up by the solid material that surrounds it, like the groove-heavy "We Could Have It All" and "Happy," in which a hummed hook provides the fulcrum for a looming therapy-session breakthrough—a very Pink flip of the sadder girl ideal. That's how Pink has maintained her sky's-the-limit outlook over the years: While she kicked off her career with the help of music-video stunt casting, her intense commitment to letting herself exist inside her music, warts and all, has kept her hovering in pop's highest echelons for nearly two decades. **B**

THIS ALBUM CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:

ES ELECTRO-SWING

SPC SIA-PENNED CHORUSES

D DISTORTION

CS CHRIS STAPLETON

drums and dull Jon Snow references. Neither the old nor new gods can save something this monotonous. **C+ —AS**



Cage the Elephant

TITLE *Social Cues*

LABEL RCA

GENRE Rock

REVIEW BY Alex Suskind
@alexisuskind

► DESPAIR IS NOT A prerequisite for creating art, but it does make for one hell of a launching pad. On the retro rockers' lacerating fifth album, *Social Cues*, lead vocalist Matt Shultz mines his recent divorce and its melancholic aftermath for devastating effect. "Sun went down/Over Pompeii/On both sides the vow was broken," he sings over the springing guitar hook of "Ready to Let Go," a song that recounts a trip on which he and his then-wife realized their marriage was over. On the gut-busting charge of "House of Glass," he enters an endless spiral: "Climb into my corner/My self-inflicted coma." While the downtrodden piano dirge of "Goodbye" has Shultz coming to terms with his fate—"You know I tried/But in the end it left me paralyzed/It's all right/Goodbye"—the guitar-picking lullaby "Love's the Only Way" has him finally accepting it ("I can see the sunshine/Breaking through the skyline/I can feel the warmth it brings"). The group does take a brief respite from romantic wreckage with the Beck-assisted rock-reggae of "Night Running," but the album's introspection paired with its urgent energy make Cage the Elephant sound more passionate than ever. **A-**

↳ Blackpink's new EP, *Kill This Love*, debuted at No. 24 on the Billboard 200



Why K-pop Girl Groups Are Finally Getting Their Due

Move over, BTS. A record number of female-led Korean acts are heading to the States in 2019. **BY CAITLIN KELLEY**

RED VELVET KNOWS HOW TO

work an American crowd. The band kicked off their first Stateside tour earlier this year in Pasadena, where you could hardly make out the music over the deafening cheers. That's just a taste of how in demand female K-pop artists are right now in the U.S. This year a record five acts have scheduled headlining tours here, including Oh My Girl, Red Velvet, Sunmi, and Tiffany Young. There's also Blackpink, which recently became the first K-pop girl group to play Coachella.

The trend marks a new chapter in Korean pop music. It's been three years since a girl group toured the States, following Apink in 2016. There have been a few more all-female tours dating back to 2010, but

you can count the total on your fingers. Resources for North American trips are generally allocated to men, even though female artists such as Wonder Girls—the first K-pop group to chart on the Hot 100, in 2009—helped lay the groundwork for the Korean music crossover.

Girls' Generation was one of the rare girl groups to target the U.S. market earlier in the decade, making their TV debut on the *Late Show With David Letterman* in 2012. One member, Tiffany Young, recently finished a solo American tour. Though Girls' Generation—also known by their nickname, the Nation's Girl Group—performed alongside seven labelmates at a 2011 show in New York City, it's odd that they never scheduled a U.S. trek on their own. "I was so busy,

just taking it day by day, set list by set list, that I didn't see the whole structure of what we were doing," Young says. "I've had the chance to step back [and say], 'Why haven't we toured in Girls' Generation?'"

Previously, Stateside performances by K-pop women have been restricted to events like KCON, the annual Korean pop

culture festival. "We've had a lot of girl groups who've had their first performances in America here," says Winnie Galbadones, KCON's talent relations and programming manager. She adds that the event's approach to lineups were "heteronormative in the beginning," where it was assumed that men liked girl groups, while women liked boy groups. Although ratios for festivals like these still skew toward men, KCON has improved over time (the first date for the 2018 event in Los Angeles had five male and female acts apiece).

Red Velvet became the first girl group to work with SubKulture, one of the biggest K-pop tour promoters, and their RedMare trek has already proved that girl groups can be successful in America. The first show sold out instantly, something SubKulture president Derek Lee notes was unheard of several years ago. However, it remains to be seen how the successful tours will affect the viability of girl groups at large. "To this point, it's been male-dominated with BTS and even Psy," Lee says. "But with Blackpink at Coachella, I think that's maybe going to be a turning point in terms of girl groups being marketable in America."

"It's not just about one artist, one group," adds Young, 29, who was born and raised in America. "It's everybody coming together. Representation is very important to me. I identified with a K-pop artist when I was a young girl too. Now there are bilingual, trilingual K-pop artists. We can represent Asian artists in general and Asian females."

↳ Red Velvet completed their first U.S. tour in February



MARINA IS STILL SHINING

The 33-year-old Welsh artist on how personal turmoil led to her pop gem of a double album, *Love + Fear*. **BY JOEY NOLFI**

"I WANTED THE BEATS TO BE REALLY HARD," says Marina—the mononymous singer-songwriter recently self-liberated from "the Diamonds" portion of her stage name—about the fierce production of her new album, *Love + Fear*. "I kept saying to my producers: 'You have to go harder on the drums! Don't be scared!' It was advice she also took for herself after suffering a creative "meltdown" that sparked a two-year hiatus. "I faced my own fear," she says of the mind-clearing musical break that served as the thematic foundation for the project, her first since 2015's rock-influenced LP *Froot*. "Accepting and addressing that uncertainty is part of the beauty of living: you can't have love without pain and vice versa." But *Fear*'s varied "bangers" serve as confident armor, and Marina uses them to rise above despair instead of glamorizing it, as she's done in the past. "You can make helpful, meaningful art without being self-destructive," she observes, crediting a new grounded perspective for her inspirational lyrics about karma, joy, and following your instincts. Still, despite the spacey, boppable vibe separating it from earlier works, "with this album, there's no 'reinvention,'" stresses Marina. "It feels simple and natural."



TAYLOR-MADE FOR VEGAS

The beloved singer-songwriter was once leery of playing a Sin City residency. Now **James Taylor**, 71, is rolling the dice on one at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace through May 11. **BY SARAH RODMAN**

HE'S GOT A FRIEND... WHO ENCOURAGED HIM TO DO IT

The artist behind such finely crafted hits as "Carolina in My Mind" and "Sweet Baby James" knows his name probably isn't the first that comes to mind when picturing the glitz and cacophony of Las Vegas. But, he says, "Garth Brooks recommended that I give it a try. He thought I'd love it." Taylor was admittedly skeptical: "I was a Vegas snob forever, for sure. Back in the day, Vegas definitely had a very specific connotation for us, and it was something [that folk and pop artists] in the late '60s and early '70s

were distancing ourselves from." Yet time, image, and headliners change. Also, the number of people living in Vegas has exploded over the last 50 years. "It's not just the Strip," he says. "There's an actual population there, and it's just an excellent place to put on a show."

HE'LL BRING "FIRE AND RAIN"...AND ALL THE OTHER HITS

"Basically, we've worked up a set that's a retrospective—there's always an element of that to all of my shows anyway—that just acknowledges that people want to hear the hits," he says. "It's an opportunity to

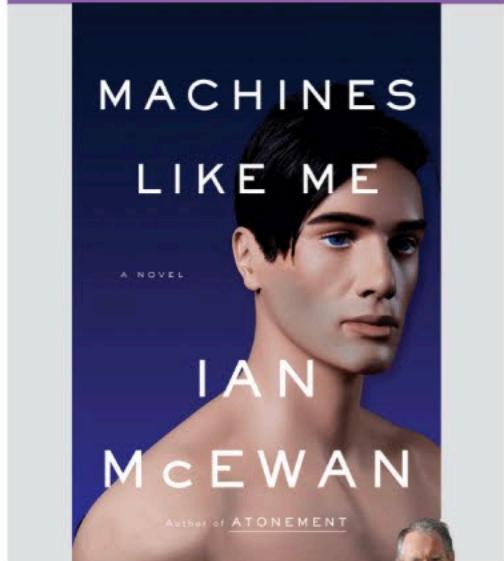
really put on our most elaborate and complete presentation. This particular staging is something we've been perfecting over the past couple of years."

THE "WALKING MAN" PLANS TO WALK ON BY THE SLOT MACHINES...AND THE BLACKJACK TABLES

He may be in Vegas, but don't expect Taylor—who is at work on a new album of standards—to be putting \$500 on black: "I think the excitement that most people experience when they've got a bet in and they're waiting to see whether or not it comes through for them, that just leads to anxiety for me."

Books

Edited By | CLARISSA CRUZ @CLARISSANYC1



Machines Like Me

BY
Ian McEwan

PAGES
333

GENRE
Fiction

REVIEW BY
Leah Greenblatt @Leahbats



OUR SIRIS, OURSELVES: HOW INTIMATE HAVE SO MANY of us become with our myriad personal devices—the buzzing smartphones we cradle in our palms like first-borns, the soothing disembodied voice of the GPS that guides us home? And how close must we already be in 2019 to mass-market, fully realized artificial life?

In his uneven but intriguing new novel, England's reigning man of letters imagines a speculative world in which that reality has already come to pass, albeit only in prototype. One of these brand-new androids belongs to an aimless Brit named Charlie Friend, and though his "Adam" can't stand in the rain or operate a chain saw unsupervised, he's still a marvel: bright-eyed, square-shouldered, able to absorb the works of Shakespeare in a single evening, pen his own haikus, and play the stock market with steadily spectacular results. At first, Charlie and his girlfriend are entranced by their new toy. But then Adam begins to manifest major glitches—among them an unmistakably human penchant for sadness, duplicity, even romantic love.

Readers have come to expect certain things from Ian McEwan; master of the streamlined novella, eternal enemy of the wasted word. He goes on longer and shaggier here, digressing into tech-manual esoterica and secondary dramas. For reasons that never become entirely clear, *Machines Like Me* is set in an alternative 1982 London: Classic Tolstoy novels have new titles; the Beatles have cozily reunited in midlife; JFK survived a long-ago assassination attempt in Dallas. And maybe most germane to this story, the brilliant code-breaker and computer logician Alan Turing has, instead of being chemically castrated for his homosexuality and dying in obscurity, survived and thrived as a sage of the modern age. But when the narrative clicks, it hums; a searching, sharply intelligent, and often deeply discomfiting pass through the *Black Mirror* looking glass—and all the promise and peril of machine dreams. **B**

15-WORD SYNOPSIS



The Peacock Emporium by Jojo Moyes A coffee-shop owner's life is changed by her zany customers. Zany, we tell you!

BETWEEN
THE
LINES

- **The Royal Treatment** Prince's memoir *The Beautiful Ones*, featuring his own unfinished manuscript and unseen photos and lyrics, will be published on Oct. 29.
- **Mueller Time** In their first weekend of release, various editions of *The Mueller Report* took up the top three spots on Amazon's best-seller list.



The Bride Test

BY Helen Hoang

PAGES 296 | GENRE Romance

REVIEW BY David Canfield davidcanfield@ew.com

FOR A ONE-STOP COUNTER TO ALL those trend pieces bemoaning the supposed "death" of the rom-com, look to Helen Hoang. Last year, her fizzy debut, *The Kiss Quotient*—a reverse-ish *Pretty Woman* about a tech whiz named Stella who falls for the escort she hires to teach her the ways of sex—affirmed the genre's durability, popping fresh characters and juicy conflicts into an always satisfying formula. Her encore, *The Bride Test*, is even better.

Hoang's books are tenderly personal. The

author, diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in 2016, puts an autistic heroine, Stella, at the center of *Kiss*; a minor character from that steamy novel named Khai, also on the spectrum, gets swoony leading-man billing in her follow-up. Hoang is a sensitive writer, but also a very funny one. Her characters' distinctive, prickly personalities yield tension and severe misunderstandings, equally silly and sweet and heartbreaking—the kind that great rom-coms are made for.

Bride alternates between the perspectives of Khai and his love interest, Esme, who is based on Hoang's mother (see sidebar). As the novel opens, Esme is living in the slums of Ho Chi Minh City, making ends meet as a new single mother. Khai's mother is also in town, to find a wife for her son—fearing he "doesn't know how to find [one] himself." She makes pointed small talk at Esme's place of work, and soon, Esme accepts her offer to go to California for a summer, live with Khai, and woo him as they attend family weddings and try settling on a domestic routine. (Esme can also search for the American father she's never met, who may live in Berkeley.)

There are so many good things about this book. The plotting is tight. The romance unfolds to irresistible, if familiar, beats. The set pieces range from perfectly comic—Khai, bewildered, watching Esme chop down his tree with a meat cleaver—to erotic, the heat between the couple luxuriously realized on the page. But the best scene, in which Esme gives Khai a haircut, is a true marvel. It's the moment he tells her he's autistic; he teaches her, in gentle movements, how to trust him, how to touch him. Once upon a time, a man like Khai couldn't be the sexy romantic hero. Finally, he's the guy of the girl's dreams. **B+**



CATCHING UP WITH

HELEN HOANG

The 36-year-old author of the breakout *The Kiss Quotient* describes her latest as "Green Card meets *Four Weddings and a Funeral*—with autism."

BY MAUREEN LEE LENKER

Why did you make Khai from *The Kiss Quotient* your hero?

While researching, I ran across a website [saying] autistic people are heartless. That made me really angry because it's not true. Khai was born from that feeling of injustice. I would love for someone on the spectrum to read this and feel validated.

The heroine, Esme, is based on your mother, correct?

[When I was] growing up, my mom told us her refugee story, how she escaped from Vietnam. It takes a massive amount of bravery, but starting over in a foreign country is something else entirely. It might be even harder. I wrote this book with a fire in my heart. I wanted badly to humanize immigrants.

She recently passed away. Does the book resonate more now?

[It] has become my mom's book. It reminds me of how strong she was and how much she loved all her kids. It brings me back to the conversations I had with her while I was drafting the book. I'm hoping, over time, it will erase the memory of what she was like at the end, and then I will only see the good parts.

BOOKS OF MY LIFE

MOLLY RINGWALD

The actress and writer, 51, translated the sexy French queer romance *Lie With Me* by Philippe Besson. Here, she reveals her literary inspirations. BY DAVID CANFIELD



From teen idol to literary force, Molly Ringwald has now published three books, as well as buzzy essays in *The New Yorker*. Coming off her latest, greatest writerly challenge—translating Philippe Besson's *Lie With Me* (known as the French *Brokeback Mountain*)—she spoke with EW about the books that have influenced her.

MY FAVORITE BOOK AS A KID

My mother read books to me and my siblings and would hide the book at a crucial moment so we couldn't read ahead. The first time I remember being entirely engrossed in a book was [1] ***Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH***. When I was able to read on my own, I was obsessed with the books of poetry by Shel Silverstein.

A MOVIE ADAPTATION OF A BOOK I LOVED

[2] ***Don't Look Now*** [1973, starring Julie Christie].

THE GENRE I'D READ IF I WERE LIMITED TO ONE

Literary fiction, I suppose: books about people that attempt to unravel the complexity of the human psyche in a profound and original way.

A BOOK I'VE PRETENDED TO READ, BUT HAVEN'T

None. Although there are many books that I feel I *should* have

read but haven't managed to yet. *Moby-Dick*, *Don Quixote*...

THE LAST BOOK TO MAKE ME LAUGH, AND THE LAST BOOK TO MAKE ME CRY

The writing of Etgar Keret: *Suddenly, a Knock on the Door*

always makes me laugh. [His books are] not written for kids, but I find that they are enjoyable for both. I recently read the story "Leland" to my 9-year-old son in an attempt to keep him off of the computer for a while, and he loved it.

The book I just translated, *Lie With Me*, made me cry every single time I worked on it.

A BOOK I'VE READ OVER AND OVER

[3] ***Bluets*** by Maggie Nelson.

A BOOK PEOPLE MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO LEARN I LOVE

Michel Houellebecq's [The] *Elementary Particles*. I'm a little surprised and disappointed that I like his writing myself.

MY LITERARY HEROES

Mary Oliver, Grace Paley, and [4] ***Walt Whitman*** come to mind.

MY BOOK THAT CEMENTED ME AS A WRITER

My second book—a novel called *When It Happens to You* [2012].

THE AUTHOR WHO CHANGED MY LIFE

I think probably Raymond Carver ([5] ***What We Talk About When We Talk About Love***), because reading his writing at a relatively young age—17, 18!—inspired me the most to write myself.

WHAT I'M READING RIGHT NOW

Proust's Duchess by Caroline Weber.



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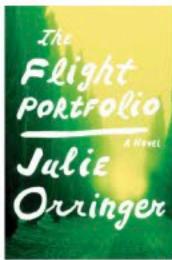


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The Flight Portfolio

BY Julie Orringer

PAGES 555 | GENRE Historical Fiction

REVIEW BY Leah Greenblatt @Leahbats

IN HER DEBUT NOVEL, 2010'S lauded Holocaust epic *The Invis-ible Bridge*, Julie Orringer made fiction feel almost unbearably real; in her lush-to-overflowing second, she returns to the same era, but finds her hero in the margins of history: Varian Fry, an obscure American who almost single-handedly took on the task of saving Europe's creative brain trust—the Jews, Surrealists, and general insurrectionists whose "degenerate art" displeased the Nazi party, and by extension the Vichy government that marched under their thumb in occupied France.

There's all kinds of fraught swashbuckling and subterfuge in Orringer's meticulously researched recounting: bribes, smuggling, skin-of-the-teeth escapes. And a gorgeous sense of place, from the teeming, lawless port city of Marseille to the idyllic country villa outside it that doubled as a hideout for luminaries like André Breton and Marc Chagall. But it's the sweeping gay romance at its center, and the daily moral quandaries of Fry's job—how is one life more worth saving than another?—that make the book's more familiar elements feel new; it's classic storytelling through a transgressive lens. *Portfolio* offers a testament to something nicely old-fashioned, though, too: the enduring transformative power of art, and love, in any form. **A-**

OPPOSITE PAGES: INGRID DINNA RAGLAND; DON TLOOR (TOP); EVERETT COLLECTION; WHITMAN; UNDERWOOD ARCHIVES/SHUTTERSTOCK/ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY COLLECTION (THIS PAGE); ERIN LEE CARR; ERIN LEE CAREY; MICHAEL REICHL; MICHAEL SINGER

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POSTAPOCALYPTIC VISIONS

A BOY AND HIS DOG AT THE END OF THE WORLD BY C.A. FLETCHER (DYSTOPIAN)

Fletcher's suspenseful, atmospheric tale imagines a near future in which our world is in ruins. Young Griz traverses the treacherous landscape when his beloved dog is stolen—an adventure saga punctuated by a gut-punch twist.

EMILY ETERNAL BY M.G. WHEATON (SCI-FI)

Meet the most fascinating AI character in recent memory. Emily, designed to help humans process trauma, finds a daunting task awaiting her when the sun begins to die.

TRUE STORIES

ALL THAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND BY ERIN LEE CARR (MEMOIR)

The documentary filmmaker and daughter of the late, great *New York Times* journalist David Carr reviews their lifetime of correspondence, in which they shared nearly 2,000 items of communication in total, and unpacks their mutual addictions and challenges with sobriety.

THE MOMENT OF LIFT BY MELINDA GATES (NONFICTION)

In her first book, the woman behind the world's largest philanthropy explores how empowering women changes the world. It's part memoir, part call to action.

SAVE ME THE PLUMS BY RUTH REICHL (MEMOIR)

The iconic food writer looks back on her time as editor in chief at *Gourmet* magazine and the evolution of foodie culture, while also sneaking in some irresistible recipes.

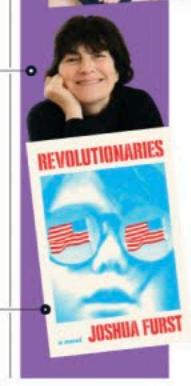
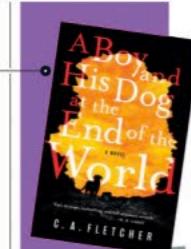
ACCLAIMED FICTION

SPRING BY ALI SMITH (FICTION)

Smith has been generating superb reviews for her seasonal quartet of novels over the past few years; this third installment touches on current issues such as Brexit in its polemical exploration of global xenophobia.

REVOLUTIONARIES BY JOSHUA FURST (HISTORICAL)

Coming off his celebrated debut, *The Sabotage Café*, Furst tours the wild, radical '60s in this ambitious novel, telling the story of Fred Snyder and his father, Lenny, the counterculture's notorious pied piper.

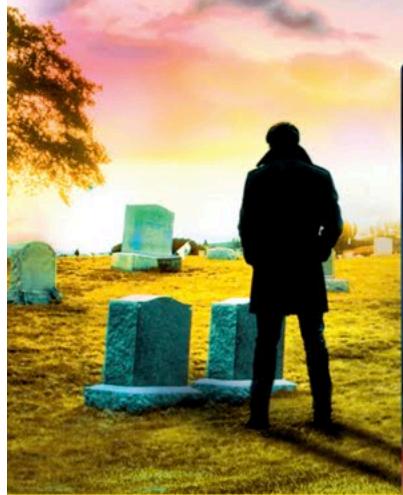


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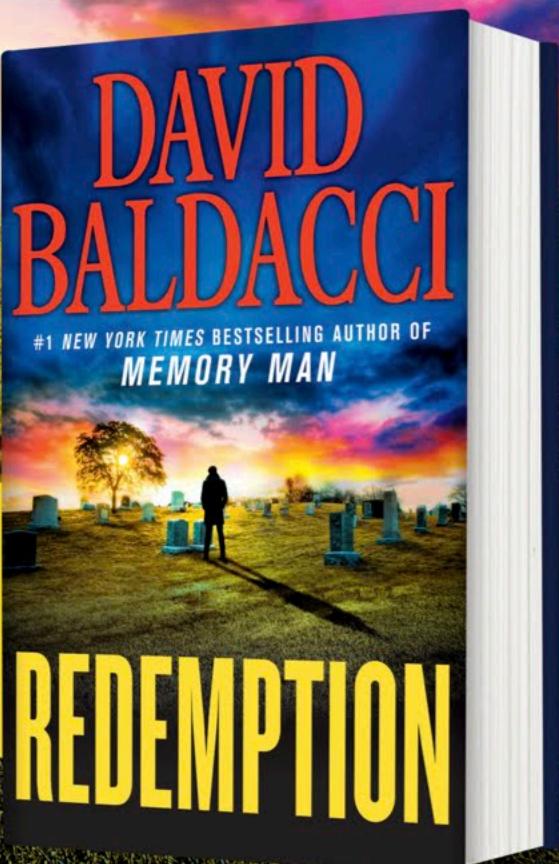
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